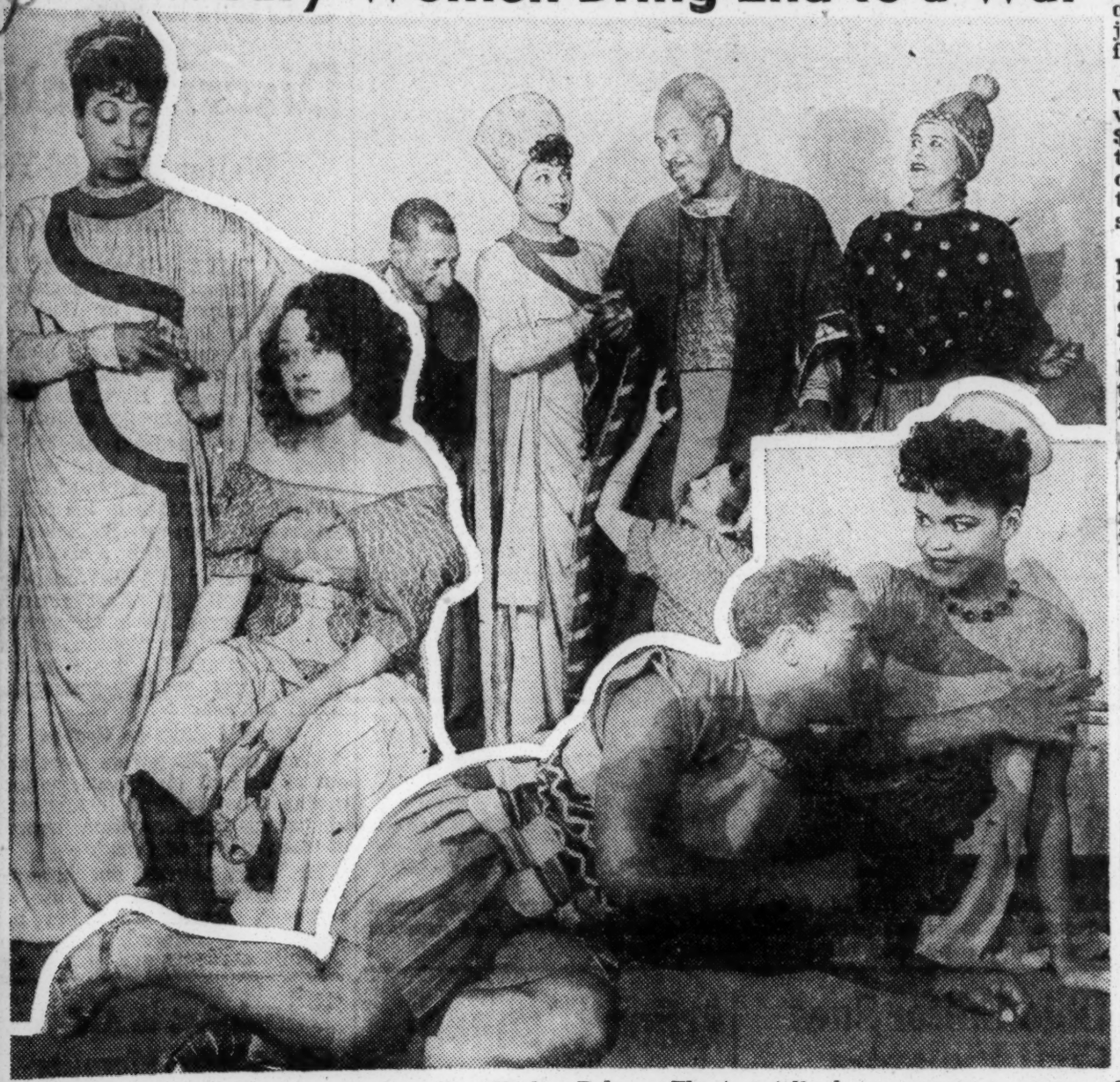
War-Weary Women Bring End to a War



"Lysistrata," which opened last week at New York's Belasco Theatre, tells how war-weary women of Greece stopped a war by boycotting love by their men. In the play: Left to right—"Oh, no, Lysistrata," Fredi Washington (Kalonika) tells Etta Moten, "I fought him off. I really did. But please, please make peace." Center: The men find out that their women want peace and will not be wives to them until they make peace: (left to right) Leigh Whipper, Moten, Rex Ingram and Mercedes Gilbert. Foreground: A young wife (Mildred Smith) rejects the love of her warrior husband (Babe Wallace) until his army settles the long war.

Etta Moten, Rex Ingram Easily Stars of the Play

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md. Sat. 10-26-46

Lusty, Sex Entertainment, With a Cast Stronger Than Director's Imagination

By E. B. REA
AFRO Theatrical Editor

NEW YORK—I came here not to re-inter "Lysistrata" as co-producers James Light and Max Jelin delivered it at the Belasco Theatre last week through a sort of Caesarean operation, but to see just what the resurrection would foretell.

The theatre was ready. The cast was ready, but the first-nighters were not. Probably because of the $12 tops, but enough arrived for the production to go on at 9:00 o'clock, just 30 minutes later than scheduled, with many vacant seats on hand.

The delayed opening of the play from the previous Saturday night to Thursday could have dampened the ardor of theatre-goers, and it did have the producers and players jittery, because, besides the producers, several of the players have financial interest in it.

Not Run of Season

Now, about the play itself.

"Lysistrata" doesn't convince one as being one of Broadway's new, run-of-the season plays, yet it definitely has one of the most talented cast ever presented in any one theatre on Showcase Lane. Its performance would be a riot in any other classic.

Etta Moten is in the title role. Mildred Smith, Fredi Washington, Rex Ingram, Leigh Whipper, Emmett (Babe) Wallace, Maurice Ellis, Mercedes Gilbert and others turn in performances that can not be overlooked.

Miss Moten makes a convincing Lysistrata, a clever woman, who convinces the women of Sparta, Thebes and Corinth that they can stop a war by refusing to indulge in sex relations with their warrior husbands and lovers, home from the battlefront on furlough, unless they sign a peace pact.

Stages Sex Strike

This she succeeds in doing by some directional hortatory posturing and hip-wearing (quite overdone), while emphasizing her sex talks to the Grecian women, who finally take an oath not to bed with their men until they have capitulated to them.

However, like the old saying, "when Greek meet Greek they usually start a war or a restaurant," the women summoned by Lysistrata fought among themselves until fully-influenced by her, but instead of starting a restaurant, they touched off the first sex strike in classical literature.

The play cavorts around the idea that men are simply overgrown boys and war is just a game for them, but that to the women, deprived of their husbands and sons and sweethearts, it is intolerable. And they must do something about it.

Rex Ingram Outstanding

Ingram is outstanding as the president of the senate, which has profited from the war. He's cramped for artistic outlet. Leigh Whipper contributes a conventional caricature of an old man with Miss Smith and Babe Wallace staging one of the most sexy bedroom scenes I've ever seen on the stage.

Fredi Washington takes the spotlight in one of the scenes by showing her ability to repulse the intimate advances of a young warrior while her husband is away. Maurice Ellis, a good acto in his own rights, serves as the Spartan envoy. Lou Swarz and Eunice Miller are convincing as Theban women, with Mercedes Gilbert in a brilliant role as the rugged leader of the Spartan women.

The play's chief emphasis is sex. It has lusty humor in spots. It drags in others and has little if any social significance. Despite its rating as one of the bawdiest of the classics, it didn't succeed this time.

Shows Power of Sex

It brings out its points on the power of sex and at the same time reveals how politicians plot to keep wars going. You can readily see this, if you can keep your mind off the over emphasis of sex, which is hard to do.

The play picks up a little momentum in the second act when the warriors return home on furlough to find that their wives and sweethearts have deserted their bed and board for a haven with Lysistrata. The men put on a lusty, sex-hungry demonstration outside of the Acropolis. The women almost weaken but Lysistrata's power holds them in check.

However, in a sense, it might appear that this would take the audience to tremendous heights. But it fails to do so. The action is not as convincing as it should be, because of its weakness. The women's victory is attained too easily.

Stage Sex Revelry

The play ends with the signing of the peace treaty. Lysistrata calls off her sex-srike. Wives, husbands and sweethearts again give vent to their feelings and stage an orgy of sex revelry all over the stage. The dancers take over. The participants kiss, hug and pummell each other as the curtain falls.

It doesn't leave a feeling, however, that resorting to sex could be successfully applied today in bringing about the end of a war, but it did draw seven curtain calls.

Rose Bogdanoff's costumes, designed to harmonize with Aristophanes' idea, as near as possible, are colorful and revealing enough to attract, but couldn't make up for what was lacking in giving "Lysistrata" a long life.

"Lysistrata"

An all-colored modern version by Gilbert Seldes of the Aristophanes comedy at the Belasco by James Light and Max Jelin. Directed by Mr. Light, with sets and lights by Ralph Alswang, costumes by Rose Bogdanoff, chiregoraphy by Felicia Sorel and music by Henry Brant.

THE CAST

Leader of Old Women's Chorus ..... Pearl Gaines
Lysistrata ..... Etta Moten
Kalonika ..... Fredi Washington
Myrrhina ..... Mildred Smith
Lampito ..... Mercedes Gilbert
Spartan Women,
Louise E. Evans, Tica Janine
Theban Women,
Lou S. Swarz, Eunice Elenora Miller
Corinthian Women,
Margaret Tines, Valerie Black
Leader of Old Men's Chorus ..... Leigh Whipper
President of Senate ..... Rex Ingram
Spartan Envoy ..... Maurice Ellis
Kinesias ..... Emmett (Babe) Wallace
Trygeus ..... John DeBattle
Nikias ..... Larry Williams
Polydorus ..... Sidney Poitier
Lykon ..... Emory S. Richardson
Officers,
Milers Wimbush, George F. Carroll
Satyrs, Archie Savage, Jay Flashe Riley
Baby ..... Andrew Ratousheff
Old Women's Chorus,
Beatrice Wade, Phyllis Walker, Hilda Offley, Theresa Brooks, Olive Ball, Ethel Purnello, Wilhelmina Williams, Edythe Reid.
Young Women's Chorus.
Lora Pierre, Geneva H. Fitch, Marie Cooke, Jean Stovall, Geri Bryan, Jackie Greene, Courtenay Olden, Minne Gentry.
Old Men's Chorus,
Wardell Saunders, Cherokee Thornton, James H. Dunmore, Louis Sharp, George Dozier, Larri E. Lauria, Service Bell.
Senators,
Harry Bolden, P. Jay Sidney, Bootsie Davis, Hanson Elkins, Milton J. Williams, Wilson Woodbeck.
Dancers,
Bill O'Neil, Frank Green, H. Roderick Scott, Albert Popwell, George Thomas, Royca Wallace, Marble Hart, Gwyn Hale, Hettie Stephens, Ann Henry.

ACT I—Daybreak on the Acropolis, Athens, 411 B.C. in the Twenty-first Year of the War Between Athens and Sparta.
ACT II—The Same. Late Afternoon Five Days Later.

NEW YORK — "Lysistrata" played to two full, enthusiastic audiences, Friday and Saturday night, Miss Marjorie Barkentin, publicity director, told the AFRO on Monday.

66b 1946

Plays ("Lysistrata")

Will "Lysistrata" Be Too Modern?

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

Producers had to change the cast of "The Beggar's Opera," the musical score written by Duke Ellington, from all-colored to a mixed one, because of its bawdy theme, but "Lysistrata," now coming up on Broadway, has the "go" sign without any objections.

"Lysistrata," a Greek theme to be done in English, is a bawdy burlesque on love. A sex strike to end a war. Lysistrata, the heroine, declares that, "war is unfair to the wedding bed!" She urges men to throw down their arms in battle for the arms of their women, or for women to "boycott the big cot" —"no more sons for soldiers." We haven't heard any objections, as yet. Sat. 10-12-46

One revision made in the modern version of "Lysistrata" is that in the original, a huge, male sex organ was prominently displayed on the stage. We're too modern for that now—except among the nudists, who still display the original. "Lysistrata" ought to be a masterpiece.

Etta Moten in Title Role Heading Company of 60

The Afro-American Baltimore Md.

Sat. 10-19-46

First Professional Production of an Ancient Classic by an All-Colored Cast

NEW YORK—Beset by "production difficulties" and reported financial difficulties at the eleventh hour, "Lysistrata," the all-colored production, a revival of Aristophanes' fable, postponed Saturday night, will definitely open hursday night at the Belasco Theatre, a spokesman for the sponsors told the AFRO on Monday.

Although the Belasco is known to have housed many short-lived productions, the sponsors are now settled in their convictions that the play will open and enjoy a long run.

Recent ill-fated plays to open at the theatre include "Blue Holiday," starring Ethel Waters, which ran four days; "Memphis Bound," starring Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, plus several white productions.

Frank Burlesque

"Lysistrata," will be presented in a pattern of frank and unashamed burglesque mingled with righteous indignation against the follies of war which has kept it stageworthy for more than 2,000 years. Presentation is by James Light and Max J. Jelin in the modern English version by Gilbert Seldes which ran a year on Broadway back in 1930.

World War I was seven years old when Morris Gest brought the Mascow Art Theatre's "Lysistrata" to American triumph, and 12 years old at the time of the 1930 revival.

Its present production may seem to follow close on the heels of the recent world tragedy, but it in Athens in 411 BC, in the very midst of the long and bitter civil conflict between the city-States of Athens and Sparta.

First Colored Company

The innovation of the present revival consists of the first professional production of a classic by a colored company without recourse to adaptation.

Heading the company is Etta Moten in the title role; Rex Ingram as the President of the Senate; Fredi Washington as Kalonika; Leigh Whipper, Leader of the Old Men; Mildred Smith, Myrrhina; Mercedes Gilbert, Lampito, and Emmett (Babe) Wallace Kinesias.

Others in the company of 60 include Pearl Gaines, Lou Swarz, Beatrice Wade, Lora Pierre, Wilson Woodbeck, Hilda Offley, Harry Bolden, Phyllis Walker, Ethel Purnello, P. J. Sidney, Olive Ball, Dardell Saunders, Milton J. Williams, Theresa Brooks, Emory S. Richardson, Cherokee Thornton, Valerie Black, Maurice Ellis, Bootsie Davis, Louis Sharp, Jay Flashe and Archie Savage.

Ralph Answang did the setting and lighting, and Rose Bogdanoff designed the costumes. Choreography is under the direction of Felicia Sorel, and Harry Brant wrote original incidental music.

GREEK SATIRE IN ENGLISH

Broadway Set for "Lysistrata" Debut

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md

NEW YORK—Broadway is all set for the revival in English of "Lysistrata," famed comedy by Aristophanes, the Greek philosopher-playwright, with an all-colored cast, the first to interpret an ancient classic, at the Belasco Theatre on Saturday night.

Etta Moten, a star of stage, radio and screen, supported by a cast of 60, will portray the role of the Greek heroine in the same modern version by Gilbert Seldes which ran for a year on Broadway back in 1930. Sat. 10-12-46

"Lysistrata" was written 411 B.C., as satire on war, and James Light and Max Jelin are impelled by the same motive in reviving it with the dialogue in the play practically the same as the original.

First Six Strike

At the time of the first production, Greece was suffering from 20 years of civil war. Aristophanes risked his life to write and produce the anti-war play, using sex with which to strike at the evil of war.

He wrapped up the seriousness of his intent in a riotous, bawdy burlesque on love between the sexes.

Creating the character of Lysistrata, a beautiful and important woman of Greece, to appeal to the war-weary women to band together and strike, "to vow never to lie in bed with man until peace is declared," he created the first strike recorded in literature.

The women take the vow, and all goes well until husbands and lovers return home on furlough.

Women Revel in Orgy

Thereupon, the ruses of the females to escape their self-refrigeration and the antics of the impassioned and pleading males are presented in a Rabelasian frolic which conceals the underlying seriousness of the theme.

It has long been the ambition of Mr. Light to give the uninhibited talents of colored actors free reign in interpretation.

He directed Paul Robeson in "The Emperor Jones," in O'Neill's "All God's Chillun Got Wings," and Fredi Washington and Robeson in "Black Boy." No one knows so well as he what colored can do on the stage to make playgoing exciting. He is giving them their first opportunity to interpret a classic.

Create Exciting Dances

Felicia Sorel created the exciting dances to be seen in the play, using the technique of ballet and modern dances to achieve the archiac Greek feeling of emotions during the dance orgies.

Outstanding in the dance group are Gwendolyn Hale, Mable Hart, Erona Harris, Hattie Stephens, Royce Wallace, Albert Capwell, Frank Green, Bill O'Neil, Jay Flashe Riley, Archie Savage and Roderick Randolph Scott.

The cast, headed by Miss Moten, also features Rex Ingram, Fredi Washington, Leigh Whipper, Mildred Smith, Mercedes Gilbert and Emmett (Babe) Wallace.

The show will open with top price for an all-colored presentation. For the premiere, $12 to $1.80; evenings, $4.80 to $1.20; matinees, Wednesday and Saturday, $3.60 to $1.20. A brisk demand has been shown for the opening.

'LYSISTRATA' QUITS AFTER A SHORT RUN

The Times

Seldes' Version of Classic Withdraws From Belasco After 4 Performances

New York, N.Y.

By LOUIS CALTA

"Lysistrata" failed to give a performance last night at the Belasco Theatre, thereby terminating an abbreviated Broadway career. The show opened last Thursday under the auspices of Max J. Jelin and James Light with an all-Negro cast after experiencing some financial difficulties that temporarily delayed the production. It quits the local scene with four performances to its credit. Until late yesterday the producers had hoped to continue the run because of a spurt in business over the weekend, but decided otherwise at the last moment. Tues. 10-22-46

The Aristophanes classic, adapted by Gilbert Seldes, was headed by Etta Moten, in the title role; Rex Ingram, as president of the Senate; Fredi Washington, Leigh Whipper, Mildred Smith, Mercedes Gilbert and Emmett Babe Wallace. Mr Light staged the offering, for which Henry Brent wrote some original music.

In the meantime, "Loco," which appeared headed for limbo, will go on indefinitely, according to the offices of Jed Harris, the producer. Mr. Harris is reported to be in Toronto at the moment taking in the Walter Huston engagement of "Apple of His Eye" and will decide on the matter upon his return.

'LYSISTRATA' WASTE OF TIME, SAYS IZZY

Courier By IZZY

NEW YORK CITY — After almost a week of postponement, which was attributed to everything from finance to temperament, "Lysistrata" finally came to the Broadway boards last Thursday night. And though her arrival was keenly anticipated, with all manner of good attributed to it, after viewing the James Light-Max Jelin presentation of the opus we're forced to the conclusion that it might have been better to leave the whole thing on the library shelf and let Aristophanes rest in peace. Pittsburgh, Pa.

The drama appeared to be a tremendous waste of time and money on the part of a great many people, all of which could have been used to better advantage in a different kind of dramatic entertainment. There are plenty of laugh opportunities and philosophic moments in the play, and perhaps if given time, these spots can be built up for greater audience enjoyment, but opening night found a group of seat-fillers who could only work up to lukewarm applause at the final curtain.

NAME CAST Sat. 10-26-46

The cast is headed by Etta Moten as Lysistrata, Rex Ingram as President of the Senate, Leigh Whipper as the leader of the old men's chorus, Ferdi Washintgon as Kalonika, Mildred Smith as Myrrhina, Mercedes Gilbert as Lampito and Babe Wallace as Kinesias. Other cast members include the names of many performers well known on the boards of Broadway, including Maurice Ellis, P. Jay Sidney, Hilda Offley, Valeria Black, Lou Sealie Swarz, Wardell Saunders, Cherokee Thornton and Archie Savage. Courier

The story concerns the women of Greece, who tiring of endless war and separations from their husbands and lovers, decide to do something about stopping their war-time sacrifice. The plan advanced by the brilliant Lysistrata, calls for all of the women to be separated from the men and enclosed in the high-walled Acropolis there to remain refusing to share bed and board with the male element of Greece until permanent peace treaties are signed. In the natural course of events peace is finally declared and Lysistrata hailed as the savior of her country, not however, before a few double entendre remarks and a couple of courtship scenes are thrown in.

MERELY DULL

Some of the performers are excellent, some good and others not so good, but to our way of thinking, the play didn't give any of them too great an opportunity to turn in their best performances. The Greek drama simply didn't lend itself well to Negro adaptation. As a matter of fact we doubt very much if it would do much more for a white cast. There just isn't enough entertainment value in the lines to make up for the long in-between periods which aren't sad or comical, only dull. The Greeks had a word for it, so they say, but we doubt very much that that word was Lysistrata!

Equity Says Actors Due Salary Despite Quick "Lysistrata" Fiz

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 11-9-46

NEW YORK—Max J. Jelin, present lessee of the Belasco Theater which housed the ill-fated "Lysistrata," is now being asked to pay salary claims amounting to several thousand dollars to the performers of that show, in addition to paying the Belasco Theater Corporation $6,718 in back rent.

Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Leigh Whipper, Fredi Washington and Mildred Smith, among more than 60 others, all members of the cast of "Lysistrata," were due salary checks for a week and a half, according to Actors' Equity Association, which says that performers are guaranteed two weeks' employment and pay, even though the show only lasted four performances.

Insiders believed that the producers didn't have the cash to open and that several of the performers had to put in their own money or call the show off. If this is true, they lost that money in addition to not being paid, according to the Actors' Equity ruling.

Trouble was foreseen when "Lysistrata" delayed its opening from a Thursday to Saturday night. Jelin and James Light, coproducers, claimed the postponement was due to scenery trouble.

Two years ago, Pearl Primus and her dance troupe encountered salary trouble with Jelin, who presented her at the Belasco and at a Newark theater. She had to fight him to get paid for her work.

Katherine Dunham and her "Bal Negre" revue are due at the Belas-

co this Thursday. She says she will open no matter what the outcome is with Jelin's battle with the Belasco Theater Corporation, which insists he pay his back rent in five days.

It is rumored Miss Dunham gave up about $60,000 in contracts in out-of-town dates to get the Belascc Theater. After the New York engagement, the production will again take to the road, including a tour of Mexico and South America.

In New B'way Play

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md. Sat. 9-14-46

LOU SWARZ, well-known actress, who has been signed for a role in the forthcoming Broadway production, "Lysistrata," with Etta Moten in the leading role. Others are Leigh Whipper, P. J. Sidney, Rex Ingram, Fredi Washington, Mercedes Gilbert, Maurice Ellis, Emory Richardson, Bootsie Davis and Mildred Smith. It's scheduled for an Oct. 12 opening.

A Great Joke Falls Flat

PM New York, N.Y. Sun. 10-20-46

PM Reviews

LYSISTRATA, a revival of Gilbert Seldes' adaptation of Aristophanes farce, presented by James Light and Max J. Jelin at the Belasco; with Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Leigh Whipper, Fredi Washington, Mildred Smith, Mercedes Gilbert, Emmett Babe Wallace; staged by Mr Light; scenery and lighting by Ralph Alswang.

When the Gilbert Seldes version of *Lysistrata* was produced here some 15 years ago, it had its decided ups and downs, but was at moments very funny and in the main enjoyable. The same version, revived at the Belasco Thursday night with an all-Negro cast, added up to a different result. Despite a good deal of effort and activity on the stage, the evening seemed uncommonly tedious.

Aristophanes came up with a superb satiric idea in having women end a long war by refusing to sleep with their men so long as they persisted in fighting. But there is no use pretending that the play, despite its great idea and its lusty tone, is given enough development and variety to make it fully holding for modern audiences. There remains a great deal of slack that can only be taken up by the production. Anything, in a way, goes for *Lysistrata* in production, including the broadest slapstick, but it requires something robustly and pervadingly comic in spirit to bring it off, and that something never turned up on Thursday night.

Much of the trouble lay in Mr. Light's direction: he did not sharpen or vary things enough, point this scene up or play that scene down, or make one thing top another, as it must in farce. But some of the trouble lay in the fact that the performers, who are competent and engaging in their own fields, are few of them natural comedy actors, and fewer still, trained ones. Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Fredi Washington, Mildred Smith and others get presence and personality into their parts, but never really get themselves into the play. The acting was exuberant but unmodulated; and as a result of the direction and acting alike, everything seemed much like everything else, and almost nothing seemed funny.

The production also suffered from introducing bits of music and dancing into the show: they were not only ineffective themselves, but they suggested a jazz treatment that should have been used throughout or not used at all.

—Louis Kronenberger.

'LYSISTRATA' OFF UNTIL THURSDAY

The Times New York, N.Y.

Production Problems Force Sponsors to Delay Bow, Listed for Tonight

By LOUIS CALTA

James Light and Max J. Jelin have postponed tonight's opening of "Lysistrata," thereby granting Broadway first-nighters a momentary respite in a week that has seen the presentation of Eugene ONeill's extended drama and three other offerings. The all-Negro production of Aristophanes' fable of the follies of war is now slated to be done at the Belasco Theatre Thursday evening. The delay was attributed to "production difficulties" by a spokesman for the sponsors. It is understood, however, that financial difficulties arose at the eleventh hour to cause the disruption. The producers were settled in their conviction last night that the play would open next week. *Sat. 10-12-46*

Consequently, there will be five local openings next week. The others are "Lady Windermere's Fan," due at the Cort on Monday; "The Duchess of Malfi," at the Barrymore, Tuesday; "Loco," at the Biltmore on Wednesday, and "Naughty-Naught ('00)," at the Old Knickerbocker Music Hall on Saturday.

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa.

IN "LYSISTRATA"—In order to devote full time to her important role of Kalonika in "Lysistrata," Fredi Washington has taken leave of absence from her position as dramatic critic for The People's Voice. *Sat. 9-21-46*

Negro 'Lysistrata' Cast Ready For Rehearsal

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Thurs. 9-5-46

James Light and Max Jelin announce that they will place in rehearsal on Sept. 8 their promised revival of Aristophanes' "Lysistrata," the timeless and timely farce about war and women and what they can do about it. This will be the first Broadway production of this famous play in over fifteen years.

Heading the large all-Negro company will be Etta Moten, remembered as Bess in one of the "Porgy and Bess" revivals, in the title role of the young Athenian matron who called a sex strike of women against their men folk until they made peace with Sparta; and Rex Ingram, last seen in "St. Louis Woman," in the role of the President of the Senate. Other key roles have been thus assigned: Fredi Washington, Kalonica; Frank Wilson, leader of the old men; Lee Whipper, one of the Senators; Mildred Smith, Nyrrhina; Mercedes Gilbert, Lampito. The part of Kinesias, husband of Lysistrata, will be filled before rehearsals begin next Sunday.

SALARY CLAIMS FILED

The Times

Equity Official Discloses Action Against 'Lysistrata' Producers

Salary claims amounting to several thousand dollars have been filed against Max J. Jelin and James Light, producers of the short-lived all-Negro production, "Lysistrata," it was disclosed yesterday by an Actors Equity Association official. *New York, N.Y.*

The performers are said to be seeking pay for a week and a half. The show opened Oct. 18 at the Belasco Theatre with Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Leigh Whipper and Fredi Washington at the head of the company and lasted for four performances, or a half week in terms of employment in the legitimate theatre. *Wed. 10-30-46*

According to an Equity spokesman, actors are guaranteed contractually two weeks' employment, starting from the first performance. Pending the return of other claims, the association will not take any action. It was explained, however, that should the producers fail to meet the demand they would be placed on the unfair list, thereby precluding them from sponsoring Broadway attractions.

Newsweek Dayton, Ohio.

¶ *Lysistrata*—Gilbert Seldes has tuned his variation on Aristophanes to an all-Negro cast, and neither Seldes nor the cast is up to Aristophanes as he considers how the women of Athens end a 21-year war with Sparta by staging a strike in the boudoir. Etta Moten—a Bess in "Porgy and Bess"—in the title role, and Rex Ingram, who played the devil in "Cabin in the Sky" and De Lawd in the movie version of "The Green Pastures," are fine actors, as are Fredi Washington and Leigh Whipper. As it turns out, Aristophanes is still good enough to take straight; as reduced to jive and jittering declamation, the Greeks wouldn't have a word for it. (LYSISTRATA. *James Light and Max Jelin, producers. James Light, director.*) *Mon. 10-28-46*

Lysistrata (adapted by Gilbert Seldes from the Greek of Aristophanes; produced by James Light & Max Jelin) is built, as all the world knows, on a great satiric idea—that of having women end a long war by locking their mates out of their bedrooms until they give up fighting. Moreover, Aristophanes' lusty, ribald spirit still vibrates after 2,300 years.

But 2,300 years has seen one or two changes in stage method and technique, and only a very brisk and inventive production—such as Broadway got 16 years ago with Miriam Hopkins, Ernest Truex and Sydney Greenstreet in the cast—can make *Lysistrata's* joke funny enough for a whole evening. Last week's all-Negro production never even got off to a promising start. *Time Mon. 10-28.*

New York Critics on "Lysistrata"

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

BROOKS ATKINSON, N.Y. Times: "Lysistrata" is not an overly inventive comedy. There are long stretches where the theme is monotonous. *Sat. 10-26-46*

JOHN CHAPMAN, Daily News: An attempt is made to revive "Lysistrata," but it won't breathe.

ROBERT GARLAND, Journal-American: So more in disappointment than in sorrow, I am obliged to report that this latest Broadway revival is no little of a bore . . .

ROBERT COLEMAN, Mirror: Producer James Light, who also directed the ancient farce, hasn't been able to give it style. His staging zigzags from straight acting to Mae Westian wriggling to ballet and jitterbugging.

RICHARD WATTS JR., Post: The melancholy thing is that from whatever view you look at it the historic old play isn't very funny these days.

Sidelights on 'Lysistrata'

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 10-26-46

By Staff Correspondence

NEW YORK—Congressman A. Clayton Powell and his beautifully gowned wife, Hazel Scott, stole the spotlight during intermission.

Andrew Rataousheff, white midget, plays the role of a baby in blackface. That evens it up on Broadway. Canada Lee is down the street playing the role of a white man in "The Duchess of Malfi."

Ethel Waters was a visitor backstage. She lauded the players and play as "being simply wonderful."

Oath by Women

The oath taken by the women at the demand of Lysistrata: From this day forth until peace is declared; although my heart aches for my husband's love; or any lover come, afire with passion; I never will take man into my bed;

But I will live at home austere and chaste; dressed in a saffron robe and amorous; so that my husband or my lover faints to hold me; and never shall he have his way with me of my free will;

Will Lie Cold

And if he overcomes me by sheer force; I'll lie as cold as ice and not respond; I will not give him joy in any way;

And if I keep my oath, let my blood be as red as wine; but if I break it, let it turn to water.

Erona Harris, one of the dancers, didn't make the opening because of pneumonia.

Blanche Yurka, who played the role of Lysistrata the last time it was performed, was present and went backstage, praised Etta Moten for her performance and was photographed.

The casts of "Show Boat" and "Deep Are the Roots" attended the show in a body.

A studio party was held upstairs in the Belasco after the performance. Another was held for Lou Swarz and Eunice Miller at the Imperial Elks Home in Harlem later that night.

That Greek Gal Lysistrata Shows How to Get Peace

PM New York, N.Y.

Lysistrata, written some 2500 years ago by Aristophanes of Athens, is coming back to Broadway, opening this Saturday evening at the Belasco. Its producers, James Light and Max J. Jelin, feel that this comedy will have a special appeal today since it tells how the war-weary women of Greece stopped a war in no time at all by refusing to fulfill their marital duties toward their husbands. The anguished males brought the battle to a quick end, proving, as Walter Winchell put it, that "the yen is mightier than the sword."

Lysistrata was last seen here 15 years ago, when Fay Bainter played the title role, with Miriam Hopkins, Ernest Truex and Sydney Greenstreet in other leads. New Yorkers flocked to see the play. Many of them, having a tough time pronouncing *Lysistrata*, called the play *Lizzie*. For the current revival, Light and Jelin have engaged an all-Negro cast headed by Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Fredi Washington and Leigh Whipper. Light himself is staging the production, which will have a new score by Henry Brant and dances staged by Felicia Sorel. The adaptation from the Greek is by Gilbert Seldes. Mon. 10-7-46

A young wife (Mildred Smith) rejects her warrior husband (Emmett Babe Wallace) until his army settles its long war.

Gwyn Hale and Royce Wallace will dance in *Lysistrata*.

The men find out that their women want peace and will not be wives to them until they make peace: (left to right) Emmett Babe Wallace, Rex Ingram, Etta Moten who portrays Lysistrata, Mildred Smith and Fredi Washington. *Photos by Kriegsman*

The Lesson of 'Lysistrata'

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

By Samuel Sillen

The drama reviewers agreed, with good reason, that the James Light - Max Jelin production of **Lysistrata** was poor theater. The Aristophanes comedy in a modern version by Gilbert Seldes folded after four performances. And there would be little point in rehashing a somewhat unhappy affair were it not that an all-Negro cast was involved, featuring such outstanding players as Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Fredi Washington, and Leigh Whipper. Tues. 11-12-46

It is one thing to vote thumbs down on a poor play or a poor production, but it is something else again to distort the occasion for an attack on Negro artists. Those reviewers who say that the actors were at fault are guilty of bad critical judgment, which is not in itself news. What is serious, however, is that such bad judgment—or, more accurately, bias—in this case simply builds a pretext for curbing still further the opportunities of the Negro artist in the theater.

I share the general opinion that **Lysistrata** was unsatisfying theater. It was ineptly directed; the Gilbert Seldes version lacks wit; the conception of the producers was a tasteless hybrid, which had neither the classical lines of the original nor the consistently stepped-up quality of a "modern" version.

Indeed, it is a tribute to the actors that they were able to salvage as much as they did. They had a right to resent, and certainly many of us in the audience resented, the ineptitude with which their obvious talents were employed by the director.

The production, therefore, once again illustrated the truth that in our theater, for the most part, when the Negro is not unemployed he is misemployed. The idea of an all-Negro cast in a classic play seemed to promise a step forward, but this promise was aborted by a lumbering "modern version" and fumbling direction.

* * *

THAT George Jean Nathan should use this as a rebuke to what he cheaply calls "Negrophiles" is no surprise. But Wolcott Gibbs of **The New Yorker** regards himself as a liberal. What is he doing in Nathan's camp?

Gibbs writes of **Lysistrata**: "The theatrical genius of the Negro, which is certainly considerable, is adapted to many things, but complicated literary comedy is not one of them, and since that was what Mr. Seldes wrote back in 1930, the evening was probably the dullest of this threatening season."

It is very generous of Mr. Gibbs to preface his large "but" with a bow to the adaptability of the Negro genius. But this "but" sticks in the craw. On what racist basis does our anthropologist exclude the "Negro genius" from "complicated literary comedy"? Is the Negro, then, too innocent and childlike, as the Bourbons have preached for a century? Does he lack the "civilized" virtues?

This is apparently what the **New Yorker** sophisticate is getting at. For he adds: "If any generalization can be made about colored actors on the

non-musical stage, it is that they should be employed only to play themselves or else to appear in elegant and pretentious works whose full absurdity can be apparent only when a completely innocent talent is brought to bear on them. **Lysistrata,** being a civilized comedy, is not susceptible to this treatment. . . ."

If this is not the voice of Jimcrow, then I am tone deaf. First, Gibbs prescribes how the Negro "should be employed." Then he opposes the Negro's "innocent talent" to "civilized comedy." Negroes should be employed only as "themselves" (is a white actor who plays King Lear or Dr. Stockman employed only as "himself"?) or only in pretentious works in which the "absurdity" is evident.

This is not far removed from George Jean Nathan, who thinks Negro actors are suited for burlesque but not for serious theater.

To complete the story, it should be noted that the Negro company of **Lysistrata** was the economic victim of what Fredi Washington calls "the poorest managerial judgment Broadway has seen in the last two decades." Miss Washington tells the story in her **Peoples Voice** column of Nov. 9, where she reports how the management operated on a shoe string with "the kind of naive wishful thinking which came close to being a criminal offense." To blame the cast for the failure of **Lysistrata** is a monstrous irony, considering the heroic difficulties the players had to face, including the raising of funds to help out a management which it would appear difficult to forgive.

PM New York, N.Y. Mon. 9-30-46

ONE LYSISTRATA TO ANOTHER: Katina Paxinou (right), Greek actress who performed the Aristophanes comedy, *Lysistrata*, many times in her native land before the war, gives a few pointers to Etta Moten who will be Lysistrata and to James Light who is directing the revival due Oct. 12 at the Belasco. Mme. Paxinou, who scored as Pilar in the film *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, visited Miss Moten on the eve of her departure for England and more film making.

ALL-NEGRO "LYSISTRATA" DISMAYS MOST OF THE CRITICS

Tribune Los Angeles, Calif. Sat. 10-26-46

NEW YORK—The concensus of critical opinion on the all-Negro version of "Lysistrata", which opened here last week at the Belasco theatre is that it stinks.

The only wholehearted approval came from the New York Times' Brooks Atkinson, who was also one of the few to admire "St. Louis Woman". The "high-spirited Negro players . . . are playing 'Lysistrata' with exuberance and impudence, economizing on nothing except subtlety", Atkinson said, singling out the "sound night club style" of Etta Moten in the title role, the "superior" acting of Rex Ingram as president of the senate, Mercedes Gilbert as "vastly entertaining" as the leader of the Spartan women, and Leigh Whipper as introducing "one of the most genuinely amusing episodes . . . by the contrast he draws between the spiritual valor and physical incompetence of the ancients."

While acknowledging the Gilbert Seldes' adaptation is not exactly as Aristophanes intended, Atkinson concluded that "the project of 'Lysistrata' with players from Harlem is sound in theory and for the most part sound in execution, like swinging the Fifth Symphony."

Also not as unkind as the majority was the World Telegram's William Hawkins, who described the show as "a hepcat's dream of Aristophanes" and decided, "The truth is, it is never relentless fun until it turns into a wall scaling Lindy Hop in the finale." Hawkins praised Etta Moten as making a "commanding Lysistrata" with her "resonant voice and authoritative carriage", and gave honorable mention to Fredi Washington and Mildred Smith. Rex Ingram, Watkins thought, resembled "a frustrated bulldozer in a scarlet cape."

The other critics all turned their thumbs down.

Louis Kronenberger, of PM under the heading, "A Great Joke Falls Flat," compared it with the first production of 15 years ago, with the new version coming in a bad second. Kronenberger thought "much of the trouble lay in" James Light's direction and "in the fact that the performers, who are competent and engaging in their own fields, are few of them natural comedy actors, and fewer still, trained ones." Moten, Ingram, Washington, Smith, and others "get presence and personality in their parts", he wrote, "but never really get themselves into the play. The acting was exuberant but unmodulated and as a result of directing and acting alike, everything seemed much like everything else, and almost nothing seemed funny." He also objected to introducing music and dancing into the show, concluding, "they were not only ineffective themselves, but they suggested a jazz treatment that should have been used throughout or not . . . at all."

Said Howard Barnes, of the Herald Tribune: "It lacks even sustained exuberance. . . . Only occasional moments of lusty humor enliven the dull and stumbling show. . . . Etta Moten plays 'Lysistrata' with a strange mixture of hortatory posturing and hip-weaving . . . Ingram is imposing . . . Whipper contributes a conventional caricature. 'Lysistrata' never succeeds in being mildly shocking. It rarely is any fun at all." Sat. 10-26-46

From Richard Watts, Jr., of the Post: "The melancholy thing is that, from whatever point of view you look at it, the historic old play just isn't very funny these days . . . My recollection is that some of the white actors in the earlier production did add a certain fertive vulgarity to their work that is happily absent from the current Negro version, but anyway, no one is likely to be upset by it today. There is a spirited and engaging performance by a charming young actress named Mildred Smith . . . Ingram, Whipper, Moten, Washington . . . are also helpful--even if Miss Moten . . . does slide into a few moments which suggest that she has an ambition to do imitations of Mae West. The only explanation (for the failure) I can hit upon is the discomforting one that the success . . . in the early '30s was due more to what was then regarded as its scandalous appeal than to any particular hilarity it continues to hold for modern audiences."

Said Robert Coleman, Mirror: "There must be reasons why 'Lysistrata' has survived for over 2,000 years, but they were not apparent last evening . . . We are inclined to find it a sophomoric bedroom farce with but minor social significance. Etta Moten plays . . . with authority, a welcome economy of means and considerable effect when director Light permits it. Then, obviously at the instigation of the direction, she invests it with a Mae Westian sinuosity that is salable only by Miss West herself."

John Chapman, News: "Feebly prurient."

Etta Moten, 22-year-old daughter of the star, in a Post interview: "A little sexy, but all right."

$12 High For Opening Night

The Times New York, N.Y. 9-28-46

We blinked several times yesterday after reading the announcement that "Lysistrata" with an all-Negro company, arriving Oct. 12 at the Belasco, would have an opening night top of $12 for orchestra seats, the highest in some time. To make certain this wasn't an error, we called Max Jelin, lessee of the house and co-producer of the show, to check it. He confirmed it, saying the production merited such a steep price. O. K. After the opening the scale will range upward to $4.80. Tickets go on sale today. Important roles in the revival will be portrayed by Etta Moten, Rex Ingram, Leigh Whipper and Fredi Washington.

Mon. 9-30-46

CRITICS MISS THE POINT

The Defender Chicago, Ill.

Lysistrata Speaks Against War

Sat. 10-26-46

By EARL CONRAD
(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK — The New York play critics, with their minds, as usual, on the settings of plays, uniformly lost sight of the main point of "Lysistrata" which opened here last week

At a moment when the whole world is rocked with the fear of war, this anti-war vehicle has a cogent meaning, but the critics saw only the sex theme which underlies the play.

Personally I liked the play, got many laughs out of it, and went away wondering whether there wasn't possibly a bit of real soundness in the theme. The theme, if you don't know, is about the women of Greece, in the year 411 B.C. who, wishing to bring to an end a war between the Athenians and the Spartans, go on strike against their husbands. They deny their husbands their love until they cease fighting.

While I'm not sure that this is necessarily a good anti-war tactic, I think it's not amiss to read into the idea that women can be more of an anti-war influence than they now are or ever have been. Mothers, who give birth to children and raise them, should show more anti-war spirit than they have in the past. Especially, in our time, when war has a high imperialistic content, when it is war for profits, women should do some thinking or acting about the kind of wars they send their husbands, sons and lovers away to.

Acted by a company of Negro performers, the play has another and a unique interest. But this didn't seem to affect most of the critics either. If audience response was any indication, however, the first night crowd appeared to enjoy the vehicle more than the jaded critics who see so many plays that they have no values left any way.

For the first time in a long while Fredi Washington is back on the stage and I liked her work along with the performance of Etta Moten as "Lysistrata," the matron who gets the strike-against-love-making idea. Other players are Rex Ingram, Mercedes Gilbert, Mildred Smith and Leigh Whipper.

The dramatists have taken the Greek version of the play and brought it up to date, with a modern setting, modern wisecracks and today's issues. They should have dropped the Greek chorus idea, in my opinion, which isn't modern and doesn't ring clearly.

Ignore Social Theme

In the nature of such a theme, there is a great quality of the ribald and the burlesque, and this version has not sought to underplay these features. But the critics seized upon this aspect of the play to ignore its social theme. Thus we have the case of the first anti-war play of the post World War II period taking a shellacking from the dailies, and therefore indicating what can be expected from other anti-war plays should they appear.

I don't know whether this play will continue in view of the great power wielded by the critics in making or breaking a play. There is no question that there are many plays on Broadway at the moment with far less meaning and less entertainment value that have been running for some time.

66b 1946 Plays ("On Striver's Row")

ANT Players Do Comedy Farce on Harlem Society

This group makes up the cast of "On Strivers' Row," an American Negro Theatre comedy farce on Harlem Society, which opens Thursday at ANT's playhouse, 15 W. 126th St., NYC, after six preview performances. Actors shown above, are left to right, front row: Hilda Haynes, Isabell Sanford, Hattie King-Reavis, Abram Hill, author-director; Lula Mae Ward, Thelma Reavis, Javotte Sutton, Jacquenline Andre, Dorothy Carter; back row: James Trotman, Josephine Cooper, Lewis Smith, Sally Alexander, Fred Carter, Curtis Harry.

"On Strivers' Row" Looms as Another Broadway Hit

NEW YORK (CF).—"On Strivers' Row," the American Negro Theatre's second potential of the year, opens Thursday at the group's new stage home there on W. 126th St., after a number of previews.

A sparkling comedy based on snobbery of Harlem's "strivin'" society class, "Strivers' Row" is a play as full of laughs and talent as the now-famous "Anna Lucasta" and well promises, even at this early date, to surpass it in popularity should it reach Broadway.

The "show people's" preview Sunday night, attended by members of the casts of "Anna Lucasta," "Deep Are the Roots" and "Showboat," showed high interest and praise for the play even in its "pre-final" state, as Writer-Director Abe Hill described it to be.

Famous Names in Cast

Famous names in N.Y. current downtown shows as well as in Harlem theatricals appear in the cast of 16. Among them are Dorothy Carter, who plays Dolly Van Striven, the ambitious mother-social climber; Isabelle Sanford as Sophie, a maid not-to-be-treaded on; Lula Mae Ward, Tillie Petunia, the malicious newspaper columnist; Stanley Greene (Oscar Van Striven) as papa, and romantic leads Louise Denson and Curtis Harry.

Spice and comedy roles are carried by draped and shapely Verneda LaSalle (Lillie Livingston); Hilda Haynes (Louise Davis) and Dr. Fred Carter (Joe), the jive-artist.

Serious moments and the social dig are expertly put over by two consistently good performers: Hattie King-Reavis, as Mrs. Pace, the dictatorial tea-crusted in-law, and Jacqueline Andre, the philosophical and lucky horse-plucker.

Able assists are by Sally Alexander, Vivian Halldogan, Austin Briggs-Hall, Javotte Sutton, Draynard Clinton and Charles Henderson.

A special musical score by Frank Fields and specialty numbers intermixed with the action of the play are promised for the future, the press office announced. These will include a dance by Joan Smith and some special songs.

"On Striver's Row" Revived By American Negro Theatre

Abram Hill's *On Striver's Row*, which was presented as the second production of the season by the American Negro Theatre last Thursday night, turned out to be a pretty confused affair about the social climbing set in Harlem, with little else to recommend it but a few laughs and an excellent set done by Charles Sebree. This is unfortunate coming on the heels of *Home Is the Hunter*. That was an attempt to discuss the problems of reconversion but failed miserably to make its point. So, too, does *On Striver's Row* miss its point. Certainly an amusing idea, this business of laughing at the superficiality of some of our Harlem residents; but the trouble with *On Striver's Row* is the idea gets out of hand and more often than not, is a burlesque act commonly seen at a third rate vaudeville house.

The entire action of the play takes place in the living room of the Van Striven's residence. The family is hell bent on giving their lovely daughter a coming out party (she must meet the right socialites) notwithstanding its empty bank book. The debut party becomes a brawl which had been prearranged by a rival social lion from Brooklyn, who also writes a gossip column for the local newspaper, " The Ramstadam."

Some eighteen actors parade in and out of Sebree's set. Some know their way around the stage; others promising, and one or two, who, to this reviewer, are wasting their time. But all are handicapped by a sprawling, disjointed script which deviates from the main theme.

It would be interesting to see what a good play doctor could do with Mr. Hill's play. If this play could be tightened, characters more finely drawn, given sparkling and witty dialogue which would point up situations and yet be satirical, **On Striver's Row** could turn out to be a farce of the first order. You wouldn't have, say, a jitterbug dressed to the extreme-extreme stopping the entire action of the play to recite reams of the latest jive lingo simply because he (Fred Carter) happens to be most proficient at the art.

Dorothy Carter, last seen in **Strange Fruit**, looked good as the gasping Mrs. Van Striven and generally is superior to the wordy dialogue alloted to her. Letitia Toole is suited to the role of Tillie Petunis, the would-be socialite from Brooklyn. Javotte Sutton has a freshness always welcome in the theatre and as the daughter making her debut, she shows promise. Isabell Sanford as the maid, has a real flare for comedy and it is a mistake to make her mug her way through her role. Hilda Haynes as the doctor's wife and Jacqueline Andre as Ruby, the lipstake winner, both gave professional performances. Hattie King-Reavis did a nice job on the wardrobe.

The play can be seen Thursday through Saturday nights at the ANT Theatre, 15 W 126 st. (F.W.)

ANT has added a playwriting course beginning now. Classes are held Thursday evening from 7 to 9. Lajon Egri, author of "How to Write a Play" and who also conducts his own School of Playwriting, is instructor. Information can be had by calling the school, SAcramento 2-7783.

Negro Theater's revival of Abram Hill's comedy, at the ANT Playhouse, 15 W. 126th St., with Dorothy Carter, Isabel Sanford, Letitia Tolle, Oliver Pitcher, Javotte Sutton, Stanley Greene, Edward Tucker, Draynard Clinton, Hattie King-Reavis, Ruby Jackson, Joe Smothers, Verneda La Selle, Hilda Haynes and Courtenaye Olden; staged by Mr. Hill.

Up on 126th Street, the American Negro Theater is reviving its ple from attending, and gets a some seasons back, zoot-suited master of jive to crash w. This is a' satire the party with instructions to turn bs and social climb- it into a brawl. Sun. 3-3-46 proof that Harlem Mr. Hill works on two levels: elf. Mr. Hill's play comic-strip burlesque and fairly ial debut of young harsh satire. He uses laughing gas riven, and the at- on his uppity folk when they strike ulous and envious fancy attitudes, and on the more from Brooklyn to boisterous guests when they get alicious Mrs. Re- too pappy or too plastered. But he t of the night peo- also squirts poison on the crueler

ON STRIVERS' ROW, the Ameri-

Harlem Spoofs Its La Di-Da

PM Review 3-3-46

aspects of snobbery, on an upper-class psychology that can be insolent and inhumane. The two varieties of satire do not mix very well; *On Strivers' Row* should provide either the good-humored exuberance of a spoof, or the sobriety of real social criticism. Mr. Hill's best moments are his broadest ones, when not the play but the playing is the thing. As a stage piece *On Strivers' Row* is much too haphazardly put together; it runs on and on, eddying with talk, introducing any little episode that comes to mind, and repeating its situations. If the play was to be revived at all, it is a pity that Mr. Hill did not grasp the chance to cut and tighten and sharpen it.

—Louis Kronenberger

Canada Lee, Richard Williams, Vivian Baber and Martin Miller in a scene from "On Whitman Avenue," the Maxine Wood play which comes to the Cort Theatre May8.

Powerful New Drama of Negro Life Headed for New York

The Worker New York N.Y.

By ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

DETROIT, Mich.

A Negro soldier and a white soldier became friends in the action of war. One saved the other's life. The Negro soldier is home—the war over, he is married, his wife is soon to have a baby. They live crowded into a poor slum tenement, and his young wife lies sick with her face turned to the wall, crying out against bringing a baby into such a place.

A young college girl, engaged to marry the white soldier, still in service, comes to see them. At home there is an empty apartment upstairs—clean, roomy, in a typical suburban community of middle class people. Free from race prejudice, she is moved by their need for a decent place to live. Her parents are away on a vacation. She proceeds to rent her Negro friends the apartment "On Whitman Avenue." Jan. 5-3-46

This is where the trouble begins—when the parents return, when the white boys in the neighborhood see her little brother making friends with the small Negro boy, who now lives upstairs, when the neighbors find out that a colored family are living there.

It happens to be a play about real life. I saw it in Detroit, where it is staying on because of the great interst shown. The author is a Detroit woman, Maxine Wood. The references to housing projects, inadequate for Negro families, to riots and threats of violence fit Detroit—and all other American cities as well. The Negro soldier, David Bennett, is admirably portrayed by Canada Lee. He tries to register for college and is told "the quota" is filled. He tries to get a skilled job for which he is trained but finds only a laborer's job. Miss Wood doesn't offer solutions—she confronts you with an actuality so void of justice, democracy and decency that your shame as an American mounts as each new situation unfolds, and you are bound to seek solutions.

WELL MEANING BUT WEAK

The well meaning white father struggles briefly and ineffectually and then succumbs to the threats of violence, boycott of his business, damage to his home. He is torn between admiration of his brave daughter and a conviction that he should support her stand and the hysteria of his cowardly wife, who finally forces him to evict the Negro family. It is an incongruous part for Will Geer to portray but he does it excellently.

All the ordinary everyday cheap and vulgar insults endured by Negro Americans are here portrayed and all the types of white chauvinists. Jan. 5. 9. 46

The old grandfather puttering around with the flowers sings in a way to chill your blood, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they nailed him to a tree?" You see Freeport, L. I. and Columbia, Tenn. And you feel the dignity and growing strength of the Negro people in their willingness to face anything if just this one white family had stood united and fought with them.

It's a good play—it stirs you tremendously to the need of racial unity and the dynamite there is in racial hatred. But just because the play gives no solution I was happy to go from there to a reception for our Negro comrade Chris Alston, member of the C.P. Michigan State Committee who has just returned from three years' service in the American Army. There was an interracial orchestra and a large number of auto workers, party members, Negro and white to enthusiastically welcome him. This was the theatre of life itself and Comrade Alston, firm spoken and clear, strong and courageous—is the Negro veteran in life, so ably portrayed by Canada Lee—fighting for his people. I wished the people who saw the play could see the same sequel I did—Negro and white organized together in the trade unions and the Communist Party. In terms of one helpless family it seems so hopeless and futile. In terms of men like Chris Alston and what he represents—it is a winning fight—come what may. WE ARE ALL IN IT. WE ARE "ALL THERE"—as the song implies. Jan. 5-3-46

Be sure to see "On Whitman Avenue" when it comes to New York. It is honest, fearless and earnest in its intent. It deserves our support.

SERIOUS PROBLEM—The issue of restrictive covenants comes in for an airing in "On Whitman Avenue," soon to try out in Detroit and Buffalo. Canada Lee, leading player and co-producer of the play, is shown in a scene with Perry Wilson.

Buffalo, Detroit Tryouts For 'On Whitman Avenue'

Pittsburg Courier

Pittsburg, Pa.

BUFFALO—An important booking has just been made by which the play called "On Whitman Avenue," one of the most eagerly anticipated plays of the season on Broadway, will be brought here before it opens in New York. The local engagement will be at the Erlanger Theater, for one week, beginning April 10, and the Lafayette in Detroit, for two weeks opening April 15. Sat. 6-46

"On Whitman Avenue," the work of a new playwright, Maxine Wood, will bring back to this city Canada Lee, dynamic Negro actor, who first became prominent in "Native Son," and so notably played Caliban, in the recent production of Shakespeare's "The Tempest," with Vera Zorina.

Appearing with Lee will be Will Geer, well-remembered for his portrayal of Jeeter Lester in "Tobacco Road," and other appearances in the most gripping kind of dramatic conflict, when circumstances bring him and his family to live in a neighborhood previously restricted to whites. Vivian Baber, Ernestine Barrier, Abby Mitchell, Phlip Clark, and Margo Jones, who staged the great New York hit "The Glass Menagerie," with Eddie Dowling and Laurette Taylor, are being designed by Donald Oenslager.

In this play, Lee will have the part of a Negro returned from war service who finds himself involved in the most gripping kind of dramatic conflict, when circumstances bring him and his family to live in a neighborhood previously restricted to whites.

Touching as it does on the deepest emotional feelings of people of all colors, it is the basis for a play of enormous dramatic impact.

Immediately following its engagement here, "On Whitman Avenue" is scheduled to open in New York.

Sun 5-5-46 'On Whitman Avenue'

New York Times, New York Mirror-Toland

Canada Lee surrenders his apartment in Ernestine Barrier's suburban home. A topical drama arriving Wednesday at the Cort.

A Play That Must Go On!

Daily Worker, New York, N.Y.
Sat. 5-18-46

By Samuel Sillen

THE drama reviewers of the capitalist press have power altogether out of proportion to their critical judgment. They can whip up a block-long ticket-line for a stick of taffy. They can murder a play with serious ideas and genuine feeling.

You can't blame the critics for their power; that is the fault of the commercial setup in the theater, the bad habits of the ticket-buying audience, the insane routine of advertising. But you can hold the critics responsible for their judgment.

The critics claim they are concerned about vital theater. But what happens almost invariably is that they help destroy whatever vital theater we have—which is precious little to begin with—by discouraging audiences from supporting a play that has something to say, and, with whatever faults, says it with integrity and punch.

Take the case of **On Whitman Avenue.** People like Lewis Nichols of the **Times,** Barnes of the **Herald Tribune,** Kronenberger of **PM** in effect signalled their readers to stay clear of the play. Yet they know perfectly well that whatever the limitations of this play, it is miles above the general level of Broadway. Not only that, but they should know (certainly a **PM** reviewer should know) that the success of a vital play like **On Whitman Avenue,** dealing honestly with Negro-white relations, makes it easier for other vital plays to crack the tough commercial crust. Conversely, should such a play fail, the chances of getting vital drama produced become even slimmer than they are today.

But what happens? These reviewers suddenly become very profound; they put on their thinking caps, which ordinarily they don't even bother to bring to the theater, so low is the level. And then they pontificate on all the weaknesses (and I grant they are there and should be pointed out) while they ignore the main issue, the main impact, the meaning of the play in relation to our theater

Sat. 5-18-46

ANYBODY can toss the hatchet-adjectives around. For that you don't even have to be an expert on 18th Century satire, like Mr. Kronenberger. But not everybody can command a sense of proportion, a common sense habit of distinguishing between matters of lesser and graver importance.

If Kronenberger had his way, not one of the four Negro plays of the season would have been a success, for he was away overboard on the negative side of even the one hit, **Deep Are the Roots.** What kind of contribution does the **PM** reviewer think he is making to a theater that will fight for decent human values?

I can understand why Fredi Washington, theater editor of the progressive Negro weekly, **People's Voice,** is fighting mad in her column this week. After reading people like Kronenberger and Nichols, Garland and Chapman, she writes, "I am coming to the conclusion that most of the boys have become cynical, or are just downright lazy, or are tired of going to the theater, or, what is even worse, in the best fascist tradition, have agreed on an unwritten plan to kill with a stroke of their pens any play which tends to dramatize the problems of the people and in particular, the problems involving the Negro."

Miss Washington writes: "Wonder how these critics, who so blithely string words together which have the effect of choking off the very lifeline of a group of people who are trying to fulfill a social need of the theater, would feel if the shoe was on the other foot? I can tell you they wouldn't like it."

Sat. 5-18-46

Miss Washington concludes: "We intend to do everything in our power to keep On Whitman Avenue at the Cort Theater.

The readers of the Daily Worker should go to see this play, spread the news of its great significance not only for the theater but for American life. We must go to bat for this play.

Scene from "On Whitman Avenue" at the Cort Theater. Left to right, Canada Lee, Perry Wilson, Will Geer.

CRITICAL and AMUSEMENTS

Kronenberger—

Going to Theater

P.M. New York, N.Y.

'On Whitman Avenue'

On today's Letters page, you will find a number of protests concerning my recent unfavorable review of *On Whitman Avenue.* Sonesses in the way it says it. One far as these letters are in disagreement over the *dramatic* merits of the play, there isn't much basis for useful discussion. In my review I stated by objections and offered, as clearly as I could, my reasons for them. *Critical* differences of opinion inevitably crop up over all plays; members of the same family seldom can go even to a musical comedy without disagreeing over its merits.

The real issue about *On Whitman Avenue,* however, stems from the play's content and purpose. *On Whitman Avenue* attacks a very serious and outrageous matter, anti-Negro projudice and discrimination; and the implication of the letters to PM is that a play with such an urgent message should be recommended because of what it says, whether or not there are vital weakother occasions when I have passed unfavorably on social-minded plays, this view has been expressed in letters to PM or to myself; it is a view that is intensely understandable; it is a view that transcends the specific issue of *On Whitman Avenue;* and it is a view that, on those broader grounds, I think calls for frank discussion.

Time: 5-24-46

Certainly the theater, in these times, cries out for militant and eloquent protest against social, economic, and political injustices. And any critic worth his salt must have social values as well as artistic values; must want to give social-minded plays every honest break. But they are still plays, they are still pieces of writing rather than pieces of reality, and in the end they can only be evaluated as plays. This is not by any means to judge them on rigid esthetic grounds; only a fool would do that, or a prig. Such plays as *Decision* or *Deep Are the Roots* seemed to me artistically quite bad; but beyond their social purpose they had theatrical punch, and could be recommended as *plays.*

When, however, a critic feels that he cannot recommend something as a *play,* his duty, however unwelcome, seems to me unequivocal. Perhaps critics, when they talk about standards, seem a little stuffy; but the critic who parts with his standards, in no matter how good a cause, creates an impossible situation. He creates, indeed, the first step toward chaos. For if the cause be put ahead of the play, then standards must be lowered to the point of approving *any* play, however bad, that supports that cause.

Time - 5-27-46

In the purely propagandist sense, moreover, it seems to me extremely dubious to plump for highly imperfect plays because they champion an important cause. For such plays can drastically impair their own usefulness as propaganda. It's not those of us who share beforehand the author's convictions that the play really needs to reach. It's the people who do not share them, who are uninformed or undecided or wrong-headed. And to win over those people, you must offer them something so air-tight and so convincing that they can't find the flaws they may subconsciously be looking for, the "out" they may instinctively be seeking. Time. 5-27-46 There are people who bring so much to a play—in terms of applauding its purpose, of feeling for its characters, of being indignant over its issues—that they sometimes, very understandably, transfer the excitement inside themselves to what is happening on the stage. But the value of any play, and certainly of any propaganda play, is how much more you take away from it than you brought to it. A propaganda play really succeeds, not when it confirms people's beliefs but when it alters them. And it will seldom alter them through characters that are much more mouthpieces than human beings, through situations that are more sentimentalized than realistic, through speeches that are battered clichés rather than words that come straight from a man's heart. The wrong methods are not only bad playwriting; what is far more pertinent, they are bad propaganda.

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Stars of Gripping, Dramatic Play

Left to right: Vivian Baber, Canada Lee, Ernestine Barrier and Perry Wilson, the latter two co-stars with Lee in the Broadway-bound Lee-Mark Marvin production, "On Whitman Avenue," opening April 10 in Buffalo.

Broadway-Bound "Whitman Avenue," With Canada Lee, to Open in Buffalo

3-30-46

BUFFALO, N.Y.—"On Whitman Avenue," with a mixed cast and starring Canada Lee, one of the most eagerly anticipated plays of the season on Broadway, will be brought to Buffalo and Detroit before it opens in New York.

The Buffalo engagement will be at the Erlanger Theatre for four days, beginning April 10. The Detroit engagement is for two weeks at the Lafayette Theatre, beginning April 15.

"On Whitman Avenue," the work of a new playwright, Maxine Wood, will bring back to this city Canada Lee, dynamic actor who first became prominent in "Native Son," and so notably played Caliban in the recent production of Shakespeare's "The Tempest," with Vera Zorina.

About Restricted Covenant

In this play Lee will have the part of a veteran returned from war service who finds himself involved in the most gripping kind of dramatic conflict, when circumstances bring him and his family to live in a neighborhood previously restricted to whites.

This situation is one that, in the present difficult housing shortage, is happening or threatening to happen in all parts of the country. Touching as it does on the deepest emotional feelings of people of all colors, it is the basis for a play of enormous dramatic impact.

3-30-46

Appearing with Lee will be Will Geer, well-remembered for his portrayal of Jeeter Lester in "Tobacco Road" and other appearances, Perry Wilson, Ernestine Barrier, Abby Mitchell, Philip Clark, Vivian Baber.

A Vital Theme Is Ill Handled

N.Y. New York, N.

Fri 5-10-46

PM Reviews

ON WHITMAN AVENUE, a new play by Maxine Wood, presented by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin at the Cort. With Mr. Lee, Will Geer, Ernestine Barrier, Perry Wilson, Hilda Vaughn, Abbie Mitchell, Vivienne Baber, Robert Simon, Augustus Smith and others; staged by Margo Jones; scenery by Donald Oenslager; music by Paul Bowles.

The latest of the season's many racial problem plays, *On Whitman Avenue*, is concerned with a Negro family who move into an aggressively white neighborhood. They desperately need their new home because of the housing shortage; they manage to get it because a liberal college girl rents it to them while her parents are out of town. But neither their own exemplary behavior nor the direness of their plight counts with most of their neighbors, who, partly as intolerant snobs and partly as interested property owners, are hell-bent to oust them.

In the growing uproar, it is the owners of the two-family house into which the Negro family has moved who become the real center of conflict. The father sides with the daughter and a few enlightened neighbors in fighting to keep his tenants on; the mother and the schoolboy son are vociferous about turning them out. In the end the pressure becomes too great; the father gives in, the Negroes are forced to leave, and the protesting young daughter walks out on the mother.

Fri 5-10-46

The issue in *On Whitman Avenue* is vital and immediate; the situation is all too believable; the final outcome quite logical. Yet the play is generally unsatisfactory. On the broadest grounds it is unsatisfactory because Miss Wood started with a problem instead of with people, and has merely traced in her story instead of letting the meaning emerge from it. Really effective social drama must first be effective human drama; in the best propagandist sense as well as the artistic sense, we must care about the people as people, not just as symbols and types.

But *On Whitman Avenue* also goes sledding because the problem, important as it is, does not in the dramatic sense fill the play. For something like half the evening, Miss Wood succeeds in holding your interest while she unfolds her situation, introduces her characters, indicates the growing tension, brings matters to a head at a fairly stormy neighborhood meeting. But since hers is a problem that can only be stated, that cannot be solved, the play admits of no fundamental progression, and thereafter it just treads water. Miss Wood, to her credit, refuses to bolster things up with large-sized melodrama, but she can only bog them down in tiresomely repetitious incidents, some of which, for that matter, have a pretty melodramatic air.

Beyond that, I'm afraid the play falls short in skill as well as in scheme. There are occasional lively scenes, and two or three characters that have a certain outline and stage value. But for the most part Miss Wood has indulged in cliches of speech and characterization alike, has made mouthpieces and special pleaders of too many of her people, has sentimentalized scenes that could more than stand on their realistic merits.

The production also adds little. Miss Jones has provided shaky direction, and so good an actor as Canada Lee is guilty of bad acting. Most of the others just struggle—a few of them rather violently.

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Other Critics on 'On Whitman Avenue'

Ward Morehouse, *Sun*: Quite the weakest of the racial problem plays that have come along this season.

Robert Garland, *Journal*: If last night's play proves anything new—and I'm not so sure it does!—it proves that Canada Lee is more than ever to be reckoned with as a fine American actor.

Vernon Rice, *Post*: Here it is, folks! That play on the Negro question for which we have all been waiting. What Miss Wood has done . . . is to bring her problem out in the open and to discuss it boldly, candidly and intelligently.

William Hawkins, *Telegram*: Comes to tighter grips with the postwar racial problem than any play so far presented here . . . Maxine Wood has the firm painstaking touch of a Hellman.

Lewis Nichols, *Times*: Miss Wood is not a practiced playright, and the final treatment of a difficult theme has eluded her.

Howard Barnes, *Tribune*: While it rates a high mark for sincerity, it is lean on theatrical effectiveness.

Chicago, Ill.

Fri. 5-10-46

New Play in Manhattan

Times

On Whitman Avenue (by Maxine

Negroes are forc

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wrangles, restate its issues, and delay its

ending.

5-20-46

hobbles, eventually halts. Fairly interesting while matters are coming to a head.

George

Mark

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and soon

landlord

and a few others fight the rest of the com-

munity to let the family stay. But the

Canada Lee, leading player and co-producer with Mark Marvin of On Whitman Avenue by Maxine Wood. This play has had a successful run in Buffalo and Detroit and is headed for New York.

'WHITMAN AVENUE' TO OPEN TONIGHT

New York Times

Maxine Wood Drama Will Have Premiere at Cort—Canada Lee Featured in Cast

By SAM ZOLOTOW

A resonant sounding board, vibrantly attuned to the Four Freedoms, our local stage has witnessed plays of sociological import from all angles and viewpoints this season. The latest to pass in review is "On Whitman Avenue," opening tonight at the Cort. To put it briefly, this one deals with the fuss raised when a Negro family moves into a white neighborhood. The program credits the authorship to Maxine Wood, a pseudonym for Maxine Finsterwald, hitherto unrepresented on Broadway.

Wed 5-8-46

More than slightly concerned with the destiny of the undertaking, sponsored by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, in association with George McLain, is a horde of thirty-four backers, who have financed the initial managerial attempt of the producers.

Mr. Lee is a featured member of the cast along with Will Geer, Ernestine Barrier, Perry Wilson, Hilda Vaughn, Philip Clarke, Abbie Mitchell, Vivienne Baber, Robert Simon and Augustus Smith. All benefited from the directorial advice of Margo Jones, who assisted with the staging of "The Glass Menagerie." Donald Oenslager designed and lighted the scenery and Paul Bowles composed a soothing lullaby for the occasion. An 8:25 curtain is announced.

'On Whitman Avenue' Hits Jim-Crow Hard

Daily Worker

New York, N.Y. Fri 5-10-46

By SAMUEL SILLEN

STRIKING a solid blow at the most monstrous crime of American life—anti-Negro prejudice and violence—Maxine Wood's **On Whitman Avenue** carries the waning theatre season to an exciting climax. The new play, written with great sincerity and truth, sharply etches the inhuman ugliness of Jimcrow, challenges the audience to face it honestly, and affirms the democratic values for which all decent people must struggle if they are to remain decent.

The anti-fascist war and the postwar letdown have dramatized the contradiction between the "Four Freedoms" and the reality of national oppression. And the theatre, responding to a new mood in the country, has this year given us **Deep Are the Roots, Strange Fruit, Jeb**—plays of varying merit, but all seriously concerned with the vital theme of Negro-white relations.

These plays dealt with the South. **On Whitman Avenue** thrusts us into a North whose brutality is no whit less evil because it is more "refined." The scene of the play is the home of the white Tilden family in lily-white Lawndale, suburban development in the Midwest—or for that matter, anywhere in America.

Young Toni Tilden, in her parents' absence, has rented the flat upstairs to the family of David Bennett, a Negro vet who saved the life of Toni's fiance overseas. The Bennetts, displaced and forced to find a home somewhere, had persuaded themselves to hope that this place might really be different—that is to say, civilized. David (Canada Lee), rejected by the university, is a construction worker, his mother works in a war plant, his 12-year-old brother goes to school in the white neighborhood, while Grampa Bennett lovingly grows his plants. A warm, dignified American family that wants to live and let live.

But the Lawndale gentry, led by real estate agent Walter Lund, are up in arms about this "invasion" of their primeval precincts with its code of "property values" and "white supremacy" racing far ahead of its "Americanism."

Fri 5-10-46

In two tense acts Miss Wood shows us the impact of this explosive situation on two generations of the Tildens and Bennetts. She has emphasized the disintegration of the white family as it divides over the eviction of the Bennetts, as well as the solidarity of the Negro family in the face of humiliation and physical violence.

What the play succeeds in showing is that attitudes toward the Negro are integral to family and community values. As the hollowness of Mrs. Tilden's verbal liberalism is exposed, we see the hysterical collapse of a person whose life with her family was all along a tissue of pretense. As Mr. Tilden (Will Geer) moves toward his daughter Toni's side, he has to make decisions that cut deep into the whole meaning of his life.

EFFECTIVE SCENES

It is in the clash between the Tilden and Bennett school boys that we get some of the most moving moments of the play. Johnnie Tilden likes his new playmate upstairs, but when the pressure of the community and his mother distort his feelings, he smashes the Negro boy's airplane model as later, together with the Lund boy, he pounces on ailing Gramp Bennett. The poisoned fury of the youngsters magnifies the crime of their elders.

Another effective scene lashes the community clan as it holds a meeting in the Tilden home, calls in David Bennett who at first with restrained civility and then with a passionate outburst burns away the patronizing gentry: "It's a lynching bee, northern style."

There are white people who fight this northern lynching bee: the easy-going Mr. Tilden who has a hard core of courage; Toni, who learns that she has been naive, but keeps striking out with independent force; Jeff Hall, who had never gotten into a fight before; Aurelia, the next-door neighbor.

The play, while hitting out hard, is by no means without its faults. The multiplication of characters and incidents makes for a lot of activity on the stage, but it also blurs the focus and produces a sketchiness in the main characters. For instance, David Bennett promises in the first act to be a central figure in the action but remains undeveloped and loosely defined, while Mrs. Tilden, who emerges as the key figure of the play in the second half, is too vaguely treated in the first. Mr. Tilden's decisions need more careful preparation. The compelling power that we feel in the clash of the children is not consistently felt in the adults. In attempting to deal with both the Negro and white families as well as various representatives of the community, Miss Wood has had to resort to an over-shorthand with each. I should have liked to see the Negro family have more of an impact on the action; it remains, dramatically, too much on the receiving end.

Fri 5-10-46

Firmly directed by Margo Jones, the cast does a good job. Canada Lee gives us an especially stirring moment in the scene with the "committee"; Will Geer, in a restrained, thoughtful performance, gives us a troubled Mr. Tilden, while Ernestine Barrier as Kate Tilden gives an overstrained portrait, especially in the second act. Perry Wilson plays Toni with a fresh and buoyant sincerity. The children are splendid: Richard Williams as Owen Bennett; Kenneth Terry as Bernie Lund; Martin Miller as Johnnie Tilden. The audience warmly responds to Hilda Vaughn's character part as Aurie Anderson. Augustus Smith is excellent as Gramp Bennett, while Abbie Mitchell and Vivienne Baber ably play Cora and Wini Bennett.

Donald Oenslager has designed a striking set of the two-family Tilden home, with the outside wall of the first floor open, so that the action can shift easily and plausibly from the Tildens' living room to the front yard.

It is good to have this hard-hitting, timely and effective play with us. We should give it every bit of support. The longer it stays on the boards, the more people that will be moved by its vigorous and forthright truths. By all means see it.

'ON WHITMAN AVENUE': A scene from Maxine Wood's new play which opens Wednesday at the Cort and tells what happens when a Negro family moves into a hitherto exclusively white section of a Northern suburb. Standing (l. to r.), Abbie Mitchell, Canada Lee and Perry Wilson; in the foreground, Vivienne Baber and Ernestine Barrier.

Refuses Free Ticket To See His Actions Depicted On Broadway

The Defender Chicago, Ill.

Sat. 6-15-46

NEW YORK.—In Maxine Wood's new tenants. An almost identical Sophie Rubin of that suburb ganize to force him to eject his Queens, attempted to restrain Mrs. Rubin, "please be our guest at 'On Whitfine drama, "On Whitman Avenue," man Avenue' which tells how such situation was reported in PM on selling her bungalow to Sa when Ed Tilden's neighbors learn May 29 when Harold F. Kemp of Richardson, a Negro. that he has subleased the top floor 112-59 177th st. and John H. Lutz As soon as the story appe of his home to Negroes they or- of 112-20 177th st., St. Albans, Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, pro- appeared, tion."

ducers of "On Whitman Avenue," May 31, both Kemp and Lutz invited the recalcitrant St. Albanians to attend a performance of first time on record that anyone their play, on the theory that it ever refused a complimentary ticket might change their minds about et to a show.

the propriety of enforcing a real estate Jim Crow law. "Before proceeding with your action against Mrs. Rubin," they wired them,

"On Whitman Avenue" Called Adult Play On Race Problem

New York Amsterdam News
New York, N.Y.

By P. B. Kaye

At last Broadway has an adult play on the realities of the race problem. ON WHITMAN AVENUE, a new play by a new playwright, Maxine Wood, at the Cort ploughs into the most obvious and everyday side of race and makes the black ghetto walls ring with the ironic echo of the hoary-headed platitudes that have for so long kept the Negro hemmed into his dirty squalor on the other side of the tracks.

The simple and daily repeated struggle of the Negro to have some place to live is told through the dramatic medium of an idealistic mid-western girl trying to carry out in living, some of the concepts of American Democracy she had been taught to believe. Sat. 5-18-46

She gives a Negro family a place to live, and the ever-recurrent drama of Negroes trying to live among white-folks unfolds upon the

CANADA LEE

stage in such a familiar manner that one frequently has the feeling of the material being old and hackneyed and of having been said many times before. But it is the reality that is familiair, as ON WHITMAN AVE. brings to the stage a totally new and fresh presentation of the Negro and his struggle for a house to live in.

What Lillian Smith Tried

Here, Miss Wood has done what Lillian Smith very ineptly tried to do in the late mis-firing opus, "Strange Fruit." The "Negro Problem" presents itself as a disease of white folks that finally destroys them when it breaks out in active virulent form. Sat. 5-18-46

David Bennett is a war hero who made friends in a fox-hole with a boy in love with a girl named Toni Tilden. So when David Bennett, as Canada Lee, found his house about to be torn down for a project, his wife on the verge of a pregnancy psychosis, his mother, kid brother, and "Gramp" about to be put out into the street, he allows his friend's sweetheart to persuade him to move into the Tilden top-floor apartment in their home in swank and suburban Lawndale.

From then on, the story tells itself, and while its inevitability and the cliches of the objections to Negroes living in the midst of a non-Negro community have lead some commentators to call the material trite, the triteness is in the barrenness of plausible answers to the question; "If a man is good enough to fight and die for his country, isn't he good enough to live in it?"

Fight for Beachhead

The average Negro theatre-goer will find himself immediately drawn across the foot-lights to identify with the problem of the Negro family who must try to weather threats, insults, and violence to maintain a beach-head on the other side of the tracks.

The fact that in this instance, the Negro family loses, takes away nothing from the dramatic effectiveness of the piece. As a matter of fact, any "happy ending" would have been incongruous nd inconsistent with the destruction of the Tilden family when it went to pieces over whether they should try to live out the ideals on which they had prided themselves for so long.

Mother and son split from father and daughter, who packed her duds and left home. While the Bennetts were evicted, they remained united in defeat, and there was painted the kind of spiritual toughneess and resiliency which helped the Negro survive slavery and continue the battle of freedom with hope for American Democracy.

As to performances, Canada Lee, who is also co-producer turned in a quiet and tense job, albeit his projection of a war-shocked soldier did not always escape being distracting instead of arresting. Abbie Mitchell and Augustus Smith as mother and "Gramps" respectively, did a showmanlike job with quietness and persuasiveness. Perry Wilson was quite believable as the impetuous Toni who started the whole show by her child-like affection and openness. Around her revolved the plausibility of the show, and she carried the weight. Sat. 5-18-46

How Bias is Born

As a heart-tugging side-show that reproduced in miniature the more ponderous struggle of their adults was the developing racial hostility in young Johnnie Tilden, played by Martin Miller. Here was reproduced the way in which race prejudice is born in a child, and if for no other reason makes the play worthwhile.

All in all ON WHITMAN AVE. challenges every white playgoer to ask himself the question that broke up the Tilden home. "Will I be willing to take my liberality from words into action? Will I solve the ghetto problem by being willing myself to live near Negroes?" That is a tough question and the play gains by not giving a Pollyannish answer.

"On Whitman Avenue"

A new three-act play in four scenes by Maxine Wood was presented by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin in association with George McLain at the Cort last night. It was directed by Margo Jones with lighting and one set by Donald Oenslager, and a lullaby composed by Paul Bowels. Sat. 5-18-46

THE CAST

Johnnie Tilden	Martin Miller
Kate Tilden	Ernestine Barrier
Ed Tilden	Will Geer
Owen Bennett	Richard Williams
Gramp Bennett	Augustus Smith
Wini Bennett	Vivienne Baber
Bernie Lund	Kenneth Terry
Aurie Anderson	Hilda Vaughn
Cora Bennett	Abbie Mitchell
Toni Tilden	Perry Wilson
David Bennett	Canada Lee
Jeff Hall	Philip Clarke
Belle Hall	Betty Greene Little
Walter Lund	Robert Simon
Ellen Lund	Jean Cleveland
Wilbur Reed	Stephen Roberts
Edna Reed	Joanna Albus

Canada Lee Is Determined That 'On Whitman Ave.' Must Live

Daily Worker
New York, N. Y.

By Beth McHenry

CANADA LEE said, when he read the script of Maxine Wood's On Whitman Avenue, he couldn't sleep until it was produced.

"I read the script and was deeply moved," he told us in an interview backstage at the Cort the other evening. "I felt the story so deeply that I hurried to get other people I knew to read it, too, thinking that perhaps because the problem presented was so close to me, I was imagining the play to be better than it was. But the people I showed it to felt the same way I did. It's a hell of a great play, and the response of people who have seen it proves it." 5-21-46

Mr. Lee said that just as he had felt that the play had to be produced, so now he is determined hat it must go on. People hav got to see it everywhere, he said, not just in New York, but up and down the whole country.

In connection with this play, Canada Lee has proved himself much more than one of the finest actors in the American theatre. The tremendous initiative and determination he displayed in getting the play produced, despite all the difficulties of the current theatre, proves him a fighting leader in the battle of our time. Incidentally, this is the first time that a Negro has ever produced a dramatic play on Broadway. Mr. Lee, who has the lead role in the play, is co-producer with Mark Marvin. 2 weeks day

"When we started on this production," Mr. Lee told us between many interruptions (time announcements and youngsters in the cast running in to ask questions and a flow of people who all wanted to do something to make sure the play would keep going), "we decided it had to have everyafterward with tears in their eyes possible advantage, so we got oneasking. 'What can we do to help

of the best directors we know of, Margo Jones, and one of the best designers, Donald Oenslager, and himself was surrised at the reaction of the audience when they opened in Buffalo.

Despite his own great faith in the play, Canada Lee said he we started to work."

Despite his own great faith in the play like Canada Lee did himself, and said so. As for the audiences who come to see it, "There were people backstage they are so enthusiastic that they are vociferous in their applause.

A number of reviewers felt about the critics was far from unanimous. Of course, the rejection by the critics rejected us. Do you know why? Because this play helped them to see it, and said so. As for the

Everyone recognized it as one of the great social plays, Mr. Lee said. "They compared it with **Uncle Tom's Cabin**, which in its day had a similar impact. It hit at the conscience of America. **On Whitman Avenue** does that, too."

The reaction of certain New York critics couldn't throw a set-up like this play has, of course, but it was shocking, nevertheless.

"Here we had come from Detroit, supposedly the seat of reaction, where we got rave notices, said Canada Lee, "and we reached New York, supposedly the seat of liberalism, and a number of the critics rejected us. Do you know why? Because this play helped them to see it, and said so. As for the

In Detroit, a town noteworthy for poor reception to plays, even the papers gave rave notices to **On Whitman Avenue.**

That's ters written to him and Maxine ay; it Wood and Mark Marvin — many some- of them copies of letters sent to y. the New York Times and PM and worthy other newspapers, blasting the even treatment accorded this play by ces to those sheets. PM particularly has been swamped with letters, he said. 5-21-46

one of Anyway, **On Whitman Avenue** is r. Lee with going on. It's going to live and in its grow and help make sleeping It hit America wake up in time to save a. **On** itself. Canada Lee, for whom this too." is the first role since **The Tempest**, wants nothing more than to New continue in **On Whitman Avenue** for a long while to come. He is course, a fighter in more ways than one. heless. And to him this is a part of the biggest fight of all.

n De- reac- tices," eached eat of the know held prej- n eyes, by the imous. about d him- or the see it, t they plause. of let-

Will Geer Rounds Corner Of 25 Years in the Theatre

By Louise Mitchell Daily Worker

"I remember," said Will Geer, back stage at the Cort Theatre the other day, "when a 'social play' was a story of a boy and a girl chewing gum on a subway in the first act, a boy and a girl chewing gum in a bedroom during the second act, and a boy and a girl and a baby chewing gun in the last act." N.Y. N.Y.

Reminiscing in a soft, midwestern drawl about his 25 years in the theatre, Geer looked more like a man from the open country than an actor. He was preparing his make-up for the leading role in **On Whitman Avenue.** With easy movements he daubed the heavy foundation cream on his hands and face. 6-4-46

Of all the social dramas, agit prop plays, people's revues, and mass chants Geer has ever appeared in during the past two and one half decades, his current vehicle "is the most educational," he asserts.

"The audience sure does respond," he said, recounting how school boys and girls and GI's troop backstage after the play to tell him they know somebody they must bring to **On Whitman Avenue.** The play deals with anti-Negro prejudice in a restricted midwestern town.

Anyone who has ever witnessed a social play on the east or west coast and numberless points in between has seen or heard of Will Geer. He has made 18 cross-country tours in station wagons, buses, cars and trains appearing in steel and textile towns, at carpenters and miners halls, in plays that said the most for the moment.

It is hard to forget, for those who lived through the treat of the opening night of **No, For An Answer,** when the government at the last moment closed the WPA show because of its "controversial content," and the players and audience searched Broadway for a place to stage it. Geer played the leading role in Marc Blitzstein's opera. He was Mr. Mister, the steel baron.

A place was found and for months afterwards, the cast appeared in a scenery-less theatre telling the story of steel town resistance against the magnates.

Geer started in summer stock at Indianapolis. He played in tents, on river boats, in puppet shows, folk plays, in straight melodrama, in Shakespeare's classics.

In New York in 1928, he started with Otis Skinner and Mrs. Minnie Fiske in **The Merry Wives of Windsor.** 6-4-46

Early in his career, he became interested in plays with a meaning but that didn't keep him from shipping out as a member of the National Maritime Union during the summer when casting was dull.

He toured the country in 1933 in a Free Tom Mooney brigade. In 1935 on the west coast he appeared in **Stevedore W,aiting for Lefty,** and **Till the Day I Die.** On the east coast, he appeared in **Let Freedom Ring, Bury the Dead,** and **Hymn to the Rising Sun** under Civic Repertory auspices. New Yorker playgoers well remember those days when the old 14th St. theatre came to life nightly with some of the best American contemporary plays on the boards.

In 1935 he went to the Soviet Union where he appeared in a film about an American bare-back rider from the South who goes to the U.S.S.R. to escape oppression. Geer played a Southern landowner. In the U.S.S.R. he appeared with an English company in **Waiting for Lefty** and other plays for audiences at the White Sea Canal.

WILL GEER

When he returned to this country, he became involved in the NMU strike and did heavy picketduty. He then made a tour of textile towns in **Let Freedom Ring,** a play about textile workers. Geer has taken many of his plays to their respect. It

When not on Broadway, he is busy with his wife Herta Ware and two children at their 24-acre farm at New City, New York. The farm specializes in strawberries and blueberries. His wife has appeared with him in all productions since **Let Freedom Ring.** She is general understudy in **On Whitman Avenue.**

Of that play, he says, "It is a lot better than any other current play." 6-4-46

If you want to get him mad all you have to do is mention the name of the critic on PM.

"The silliest thing I ever heard," said Geer, "is Louis Kronenberger's remark that the actors struggled with their parts in **On Whitman Avenue.** My present role was the easiest one to learn because it is so real. There is nothing phony about it. 6-4-46

"Anyone who makes such a statement belongs with 18th century literature or on the sports page."

'On Whitman Avenue' guarded

The Tribune, Los Angeles, Calif. Sat. 9-21-46

NEW YORK — Special plainclothesmen have been detailed to guard the Cort theatre, where "On Whitman Avenue" is playing, since the box office received a telephone call warning the management not to raise the curtain on any more performances. The caller identified himself as a member of the Klu Klux Klan.

Stage Play Enacted in Real Life

By Max Gordon Daily Worker

On Whitman Avenue has already brought social results in one important respect. It has focussed attention on the widespread, vicious practice of "restrictive covenants," signed agreements among homeowners in a particular community barring sale or ing of homes to Negroes, and sometimes Jews as well. N.Y. N.Y.

As if coincidentally, an actual case involving these covenants has come to light in St. Albans, L. I. Mrs. Sophie Rubin is facing a legal suit to restrain her from selling her house to a Negro because she once signed such a covenant.

I say "as if coincidentally" because the issue has actually been a live one for some time. If the Rubin case is receiving greater prominence than others in the past, it is because the problem has been dramatized in the play.

During the recent session of the State Legislature, which wound up in March, bills to outlaw restrictive covenants were introduced by Assemblyman Hulan Jack and William T. Andrews, Harlem Democrats, and by State Senator Alex Falk, Washington Heights Democrat.

Despite the fact that the national Negro press has been campaigning on the issue for many months and such organizations as the National Urban League had embraced elimination of the covenants as their major work, there was surprisingly little pressure for these measures.

PLAY SERVES PURPOSE OF MATERIAL

From a political-social point of view, then, **On Whitman Avenue** has served a distinct, material purpose in that it has made people here sensitive to restrictive covenant issue, which is at the heart of the problem of Negro housing in most northern urban centers. **It has properly dramatized the fact that behind these covenants are the grasping realty interests who fear a loss of property values.**

As such, it is successful as a crusading piece of work, I do not pretend to be a judge regarding its artistic merits, but it appears to me its critics are somewhat one-sided in that they fail to judge it relatively. It is true it has not the universal greatness of the classics. But what modern Broadway play has? As drama, it appears to me to compare favorably with the best with only rare exception, that Broadway has produced in recent years.

Undoubtedly, we all want a play with such a message to be artistically without reproach. But when it is panned for failure to reach that height, the impression is created that it is worse than other Broadway plays toward which we are more tolerant because less passionately interested. And that just isn't so. 6-7-46

COURT RULINGS ON COVENANTS

There have been court rulings on the covenants in Los Angeles and in Canada. On December 6, 1945, Superior Court Judge Thurmond Clark in Los Angeles ruled that they violated the 14th amendment of the U. S. Constitution, which provides that the rights of citizens shall not be abridged because of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

"This court is of the opinion that it is time that members of the Negro race are accorded, without reservations and evasions, the full rights guaranteed them under the 14th amendment of the Federal Constitution," Judge Clark ruled in

CANADA LEF

I recall writing about them several times, speaking at meetings, and 59 other prominent Negroes. Also in December of last year, Justice Kellar Mackay of the Ontario Supreme Court ruled against Actress Hattie McDaniel and by the Atlantic Charter. This was probably the first case in which a judge made a court de-

'Whitman Avenue' Lands Solid Punch Against Hate

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Scene on a Rocky Avenue

By RALPH MATTHEWS

NEW YORK (AFRO National Bureau). — Many years ago I learned that in order to really appreciate a play one should never read what the critics have to say about it, before seeing it one's self.

I made the mistake of violating this tried and true rule before dropping into the Cort Theatre, just off Broadway, to witness "On Whitman Avenue," the new drama dealing with the veterans' housing problem, starring Canada Lee, and, as a consequence, I had many mixed emotions as to just what the evening might hold.

According to the paid reviewers, the play was either the most dismal flop or the season's outstanding hit, dependent upon their respective points of view.

Reaches Neither Extreme

I found it reached neither extreme but was a powerful revelation of an acute problem which faces colored people in general, regardless of whether they are war veterans or not, on which this particular theme is built.

Although Canada Lee was the listed star of the production of which he is co-producer, he was not actually the star in the theatrical sense of the word, but more or less a symbol around which the play revolved.

The whole group of colored artists which included Vivian Baber as his wife! Abbie Mitchell as his mother; Gus Smith, the grandfather, and 12-year-old Richard Smith, all fell in the same category. 5-18-46

Passively Eloquent

Their contribution to the play was not so much as what they did themselves, but in what they permitted to happen to them. By the restraint with which they symbolized the suffering of great masses of colored citizens they were passively eloquent.

Only once did Canada Lee get a chance to reach the height of the characterization he attained in "Native Son," and even in this brife moment, where he refused the charity of his tormentors, his reactions were negative.

He brought tears to the eyes of those who shared his sense of frustration and could not give the answer to his question, "Why must I move from the only decent house I have ever lived in simply because I am colored and my neighbors are white?"

Toni Tilden Sympathetic

On the positive side was Toni Tilden, played by Perry Wilson, a dynamic young woman who dared to rent her upstairs apartment to a colored family because they needed a place to live, while a sympathetic interpretation was turned in by Will Geer as the father, who was in constant conflict between his love for his family and his sense of justice.

Ernestine Barrier in the role of his wife easily had the most difficult job from the strictly dramatic point of view because her role by no means was a sympathetic one. 5-18-46

The story reveals what can happen to otherwise decent people of both races when they become enmeshed in the unreasoning tangles of prejudice.

Neighbors Gang Up

Neighbors, through various devices of threat, coercion, ostracism, compelled the white family to dispossess the colored family whom the former admitted were the best tenants they ever had.

As the curtain falls with the forces of reaction triumphant, with the obtrusive Bennett family forced to vacate to live again in the hovels of a segregated ghetto, the impulse of the auditor is to cry out, "Why doesn't somebody have the guts to fight back?"

But, sober reflection tells us that if realism is the objective, this is the best honest ending the author could give.

A victory for the Bennetts would have never driven home the true picture of America because, while more dramatic, it would have given the erroneous impression that the race problem was being solved, so what's all the shouting about?

A greater lesson, however, was taught because I overheard a man say to his companion, as he stood and applauded, for four curtain calls: "Seeing this play makes me feel ashamed I'm white."

If this is indicative of the reaction of the thousands who view it, Maxine Wood, the author, has accomplished much more than she dreamed she would. This play [illegible]

This scene is one of the dramatic indictments of intolerance shown in the Canada Lee-Mark Marvin production, "On Whitman Avenue," which opened last week at the Cort Theatre, New York, and speaks bravely about discrimination. Left to right, Canada Lee, the star; Richard Williams, Vivienne Baber and Marty Miller.

Canada Lee and Will Geer in a scene from 'On Whitman Avenue.'

Canada Lee's Play Closes

Defender Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 4-21-46

NEW YORK — (NNPA) — A decided slump in the box office receipts of "On Whitman Avenue" prompted the producers to close the Maxine Wood play after Saturday night's performance at the Cort Theater.

Sponsored by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, and starring Lee this dramatic plea for race tolerance opened May 8.

Change the World

Daily Worker, N.Y.
By Mike Gold

BROADWAY theater critics have been receiving a bit of heated criticism themselves this season. They deserve the downward thumb. Their verdicts are usually too smart alecky and superficial.

These wage slaves of criticism fall between two stools. They are forced to review a play on its first night, a job done within moments of the closing curtain. 5-30-46

No time for reflection, second thought or anything but a hurry-up reaction is given the slaves. It is a reporting job, really, like some four-alarm fire in a frosty midnight. No genius of journalism could be expected to do more than report his impressions of the diamonds worn by Mrs. George Washington Cavanaugh and other first-nighters; the way somebody sneezed, groaned or wisecracked in the audience; the final applause or booing, etc., etc. THUS.

But the critic is expected to do this and be a theatrical sage, too, a witty essayist like Bernard Shaw or Max Beerbohm, an esthetic scholar and theatrical historian like William Hazlitt or even Goethe.

But theater critics are unhappy creatures with thin hair and worried eyes, dodging from saloon to saloon like little rats trying to fool their persecutors, whose name is legion. Everyone on Broadway dislikes the critics, at the same time sucking up to them for opportunistic reasons, buying them drinks and buttering them up in most shameless style.

New York, New York

BADLY rushed for time, sick of theater-going, full of Broadway gossip and slime, tavern-lizards, or frustrated college professors, the morning after report of these muddled people makes up a total impression which affects the potential audience, and often manages to make a play or to kill it. 5-30-46

This is the unfair element: that upon one night's performance before an audience of such jaded professionals, the fate of every American play must depend.

Critics, however, aren't the main danger to a mature and healthy American theater. This is where I disagree with some of the anguished victims of bad criticism, the actors, playwrights and producers who have been conducting the annual anti-critic crusade this season.

Critics are employed by millionaire real estate men and millionaire newspaper publishers. An invisible government rules them, too. So far can they go, and no further. They serve the same master that makes theater rent a main factor in American theatrical production today.

Theater critics reflect limitations of the capitalist system against whose crass and ruthless profiteering the theater beats its idealistic head in vain. Critics are human; does anybody expect them to commit suicide and to fight the capitalist system?

Most intellectual work under capitalism becomes a form of prostitution at some point or other. The critics display which the Broadway season is so replete. their brass collar when some honest piece But have you ever mingled in the of anti-capitalist writing comes along, like this play, **On Whitman Avenue.**

Most of us who have seen it will swear upon our sacred honor as trade unionists and Communists that it is a stirring drama on a tragic American theme—Jim-crow.

A Broadway critic should judge such a play with the generosity and yearning to be fair he displays when reviewing any leg-show or snide musical comedy with

saloons and parlors of the well-fed and snooty? Sophistication, the light, casual approach to everything, is the rule. Anyone who lifts his voice and gets too earnest about things like Jimcrow has committed a faux pas against capitalist culture.

On Whitman Avenue does just that, I believe. Even Louis Kronenberger, haughty aristocrat who reviews plays for **PM**, was constrained to abandon his uncomfortable liberalism and to assume the esthetic stance. "Bad manners!" he snorted. "Unesthetic!" Sat. 5-20-46

It is a trick I have seen practiced in the theater by these critics ever since I can remember. They went "esthetic" against Bernard Shaw, Leo Tolstoy; they used it against O'Neill, Odets, Konstantin Simonov, almost any other serious playwright on the social conflict.

Truth offends them. They prefer beautiful legs and light, pastiche comedy. Something is already rotten in a social class that cannot face the truth. Every New York worker with a mature mind will enjoy **On Whitman Avenue**, find it not shocking or strange, but deeply moving and true. But the bourgeois "esthetic" will turn away in alarm, as though they were not living with the rest of us in an atombomb world.

'On Whitman Avenue' Settles No Problem, But Pleases The Audience

Chicago Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 5-18-46

A new two-act play in four scenes by Maxine Wood was presented by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin in association with George McLain at the Cort last night. It was directed by Margo Jones with lighting and one set by Donald Oenslager, and a lullaby composed by Paul Bowles.

The Cast

Johnnie Tilden	Martin Miller
Kate Tilden	Ernestine Barrier
Ed Tilden	Will Greer
Owen Bennett	Richard Williams
Gramp Bennett	Augustus Smith
Wini Benentt	Vivienne Baber
Bernie Lund	Kenneth Terry
Aurie Anderson	Hilda Vaughn
Cora Bennett	Abbie Mitchell
Toni Tilden	Perry Wilson
David Bennett	Canada Lee
Jeff Hall	Philip Clarke
Belle Hall	Betty Green Little
Walter Lund	Robert Simon
Ellen Lund	Jean Cleveland
Wilbur Reed	Stephen Roberts
Edna Reed	Joanna Albus

By ROB ROY

NEW YORK — "On Whitman Avenue," a problem play with a new wrinkle, and one which Broadway has been waiting for, made its belated appearance last Wednesday at the Cort Theatre and at the end of two hours of work no problem was solved.

However, several had been presented for the audience's consumption. There was the matter of a war veteran and hero fighting hard to maintain a home in a restricted territory he had rented from the daughter of the owner of a duplex apartment, during the latter's absence. There was the split brought about in the household of the landlord when the father attempted to support his daughter's side of the transaction and many troubles the unwanted tenants had in securing work, food and the like as long as they held out for occupancy of the apartment. And there were bloody noses the result of neighborhood kids repeatedly attacking the vet's son. In the end the family is forced to give up the apartment which accounts for our saying no problem had been solved. But when have, and will such problems ever be solved? Sat. 5-18-46

"On Whitman Avenue" is unlike any of its predecessors, "Deep Are The Roots," "Young American," and the first of such plays, "Stevedore" which arrived when some of the players in the Cort's production were mere kids. Where the first two dealt with mixed romance and the latter lynching of a framed suspect the present Broadway piece deals with problems amid "restrictive covenants." Perhaps this is the difference that warrants our prediction that the Cort will be tennanted for quite some time.

Canada Lee who plays the part of the vet and head of the household turns in a creditable job, while Vivian Baber, as his wife, does well enough with what she is asked to do for the play. Vivian has been absent from the stage for several years and her return was welcome to those who remember her as one of the real beauties of Broadway.

Abbie Mitchell plays the mother and, as you expect, does a commendable job. Augustus Smith is convincing as "Gramps" Bennett which is the character name of the Negro family. Sat. 5-18-46

Richard Williams, Martin Miller and Kenneth Terry who appear as other members of the "Bennett" family are appropriately cast and do fine supporting jobs.

But it seems the laurels for acting must go to Canada Lee as David Bennett and Will Greer as Ed Tilden, the white father.

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Canada Lee saw and
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Maxine Wood was raise
troit, educated at Well
the Carnegie Institute
nology Drama School.
College she wrote pl
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After graduating she
radio, wrote more plays
around the world. Ea
'30s she went on a de
aboard the S. S. Empres

science to the message of the play Sun. 5-19-46

Detroit is Maxine Wood's home less 'untouched' middle class and town and she said she wasn't sure to masses of high schol and coljust how the play would take lege students. And these were the there. people who came backstage to

"To begin with," she said, "it's ask us, 'what do we do now'?"
a 'cold theatre' town and we did To a playwright like Maxine
practically no advertising. I Wood that's success.
thought that perhaps our au- **On Whitman Avenue**, written
dience would be limited to union two years ago, knocked around
people and other socially con- for a stretch, catching nothing
scious groups. Instead, I found but praise from producers who
thought it was too hot, or figured

'On Whitman Avenue' Realizes Goal for Author Maxine Wood

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

By BETH McHENRY

MISS MAXINE WOOD is an interesting example of a playwright who reacts to her audiences about the same as they do to her **On Whitman Avenpe.**

She is openly thrilled by the reaction of the hundreds who saw the play in Detroit and Buffalo before it came to New York, as well as those people who have seen at the Cort Theatre here. It was written to them and the message came through and what some of the critics have had to say about the play is pretty secondary to Miss Wood.

Maxine Wod answered her own door bell the other morning, the second one after the play's opening in New York. She said she probably was tired but hadn't had time to notice it. She's a dark-haired young woman, with big eyes in an animated face. She talked fast, rushing her sentences, telling us about the minister in Detroit who saw the play and returned with his whole Sunday School class for another performance. And about the doctor who bought and sent tickets to every interne in his hospital because he believed it was essential for them to see the play. And about the hundreds of people who streamed backstage after every performance to see Canada Lee and herself, many of them people who never before had thought of the Negro problem as a matter for their own concern but who reacted sharply and with con-

Sun-5-14-46

MAXINE WOOD

Lack Of Romance May Increase Empty Seats For 'On Whitman Avenue

By JOHN M. LEE

NEW YORK — Canada Lee has long been in search of a play that is worthy of his sterling talent. During the period since the final closing of "Native Son," he has done, "South Pacific," a bit in "Anna Lucasta," and the unhappy Caliban in Margaret Webster's production of "The Tempest." All the while he was searching for a vehicle that would give him the opportunity to act, as only he can, and to get across a message helpful to the struggle that is so close to his heart. He was "sold" when he read Maxine Wood's script. It dealt with the right of decent, respectable Negro families to live in sections that had prevously been occupied by whites.

Whether or not Canada Lee the producer has made a wise selection of a play from the point of financial returns is a question that only time can answer, but there can be no doubt about the timeliness of the message it brings. Miss Wood has undertaken to show up a grave injustice of the American scene, and in her enthusiasm for the cause, she has too often forgotten to make her propaganda entertaining. The first night audience at the Cort Theatre was, from indications, made up largely of persons who are warm followers of Canada Lee's, and of the struggle for equal citizenship for Negro Americans.

Ignores Service Record

Seemingly, it should be simple to tell the tale on an ex-G.I. who was good enough to have fought for his country, but was not good enough to occupy the top half of a duplex house on Whitman ave., in a quiet little Mid-West suburb, but Miss Wood has dramatized her story with extremes. The Negroes, Richard Williams as Owen Bennett, Augustus Smith as grandpa Bennett, Vivienne Baker as Wini Bennett, Abbie Mitchell as Cora Bennett, and Canada Lee as David Bennett, are all right, and the whites, portrayed by a group headed by the distinguished and able Will Geer, are all wrong.

Miss Wood moves her play along as she emphasizes the rightness of the Negroes and the wrongness of the whites, with nary a hint as to how the problem might be overcome. In the end, she admits the weight of the question is too heavy for her talented pen, as she has the Negro family moved from their comfortable quarters in response to the demands of the neighborhood whites who have been acting as though they were living in a street with a family of untamed beasts. There are times when Miss Wood shows signs of charming naivette, and there are times when her drama is good and believable.

Gives Play Protection

Canada Lee, the actor, gives Canada Lee the producer plenty of protection. He makes his character of David Bennett, the returned, house-hunting, G.I. live as he moves about the stage with ease and naturalness.

"On Whitman Avenue" comes to Broadway in the wake of a number of plays on the race problem, of which "Deep Are The Roots" is unequestionably the more successful so far as length of run is concerned. It is possible that "On Whitman Avenue" will surpass it, but don't put it down as my prediction. "Deep Are The Roots" deals with a theme that is deeply rooted in sex, a subject that can find curiosity and attentive understanding in the most reactionary camp. Theatre-goers who deplore the mingling of the races will go to see it in much the same spirit that estimable gentlemen furtively attend a hot burlesque show.

Eliminates Romance

On the other hand, "On Whitman Avenue" does not have the slightest hint of miscegnation, or free mingling of the races to help it along. In a sense, it is a laborious piece that sets out to show right and wrong and how it can play havoc with human lives existing in dark skins. Only a heavy sprinkling of the faithful can keep the seats completely enough occupied to make it a paying venture. Its idealism is its chief asset, but that very virtue may prove its undoing.

Whatever else may happen to it, "On Whitman Avenue" will have those who see it choosing up sides for a long time to come. Because the effort to highlight the shame that is practiced against Negroes in keeping them out of decent housing is done with a heavy hand, there are many among those whom the play seeks to aid who will not accept its treatment. It is needless to say that even among liberal-minded whites, there are some who look more kindly on a clandestine mixed-race romance than they do on the prospect of living next door to, or in the same house with a Negro family.

'On Whitman Avenue' Praised By Mrs. Robeson, Rabbi Franklin

(Below are two of the hundreds of letters received by the author and producers of "On Whitman Avenue." Mrs. Robeson is the author of many books and articles. Rabbi Franklin is a nationally known Jewish leader.)

Dear Maxine Wood:

I called in at 887 Whitman Ave. Friday night (at the Cort Theatre) and was deeply gratified to see the script I had liked so much successfully translated from the page to the stage. I enjoyed the visit enormously and was at one with the rest of the audience in my enthusiastic applause at the end. I was delighted with the way in which you have clarified your idea and the cast handles it beautifully. I feel and hope that there will be many callers at 887 and that they will enjoy the visit as much as I did. Congratulations and thank you.

Very sincerely,
ESLANDA GOODE
(Mrs. Paul Robeson)

* * *

My dear Maxine Wood:

Seldom have I been so deeply stirred as I was last night when Mrs. Franklin and I had the rare privilege of witnessing the super presentation of your truly great play, **On Whitman Avenue.** You have treated a basic social problem understandingly and objectively. You have pulled no punches and yet you have not allowed your emotions to run away with your recognition of "things as they are." You have perhaps solved no problem, but you have made the nature of the problem clear and definite and that is the first step toward solution.

I congratulate you upon your fine achievement and feel sure that it will be only the first of a series of triumphs in the dramatic field.

You are especially fortunate in having your play presented by such a very fine group of players. They dealt with your lines with a fine balance of power and restraint.

Always cordially yours,
RABBI LEO M. FRANKLIN.

'On Whitman Avenue' has been awarded the American Labor Party's annual arts award as "the most effective contribution toward the furtherance of the rights of mankind." City Councilman Eugene Connolly is presenting the scroll to Canada Lee while the other members of the cast and co-producer Mark Marvin (at the extreme left) look on. Maxine Wood's powerful play of Negro and white relations attains its 100th performance at today's matinee (Saturday).

Unusual Public Response To 'On Whitman Avenue'

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Thurs. 8-29-46

As Maxine Wood's powerful drama against racial discrimination, **On Whitman Avenue,** starring Canada Lee, continues to pile up its successful number of performances at the Cort Theatre, the play's producers, Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, have each day been receiving letters from those who have seen it and they all sum up to the question: How can I help promote a still greater interest in **On Whitman Avenue?** In a great number of instances, checks have been enclosed for the purchase of seats to be given to those whom the writers feel should not leave this play unseen.

EXCELLENT PLAY

For example, here is a letter from Terry Olewitz, a high school student, of 1835 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, so typical of the many received:

"I thought the play was excellent. It held me every minute.

"I would like to offer my services in helping promote greater public interest in this play."

Here is another type of letter from Miriam Phipps Pomeroy, of 569 W. 150th St.:

"I believe it's highly important even for people who might be as convinced as I was that discrimination is an intolerable burden for everyone to see the play. It gives many like myself one of the few chances we have to experience the reality and not just the idea.

"It is an honest, magnificent and heartbreaking experience."

HITS MARK

Rhea Gurian, a student at La

Assemblyman Lauds 'On Whitman Avenue'

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Wed. 9-11-46

Upon invitation of Mr. Canada Lee, co-producer and Maxine Wood, and the entire cast have, islator who has fought for enact- Whitman by their stirring performance of ment of laws abolishing discrimina- Bronx, this exciting play, made a positive tion in regards tot housing and who star of the current Broadway dramatic hit, **On Whitman** Avenue, Assemblyman Leo Isacson of the 13th A.D., Bronx, Addressing the audience, Mr. passed a law against racial discrimination in employment, but we have Isacson stated, "Mr. Canada Lee, failed to abolish discrimination in Mr. Marvin, the author, Miss Max- regards to housing. As a State Legislature has that our State Legislature has as portrayed in the play. formance, to verify to the audience the discriminatory housing practices Canada Lee after last night's per- democracy." appeared on the stage with Mr. contribution to the development of

nas made a great deal of research into this problem, I can verify to you that what you have seen is true.

"Progressive social dramas like the one you have seen tonight are sorely needed in our theaters today. **On Whitman Avenue** is a scorching indictment against prejudice. Its message points up with dramatic clarity that prejudice is not and must not become a part of our concept of democracy. After seeing **On Whitman Avenue** one becomes charged with the social responsibility to do something to abolish the evil practices of discrimination. The message contained in this great play must be delivered to as many people as possible and I urge you to tell your friends and neighbors to see it."

LEO ISACSON

Here To Yonder

Langston Hughes

The Defender
Chicago, Ill.
On Whitman Avenue Sat. 6-22-46

OUT-OF-TOWN visitors to New York this summer should put at the top of their theatre list the new play, "On Whitman Avenue." It is the most effective play I have ever seen dealing with the problems of Negro-white relationships in America.

"On Whitman Avenue" is a deeply moving human drama about today's undemocratic trap in which Americans find themselves. Its plot concerns the housing problem as it relates to race prejudice and growing restrictive covenants. But its nuances and implications reach out into the darkest corners of our "American dilemma." All of the old hidden, real and stereotyped fears and phobias of the whites are brought out in this play. And the tragedy of whites of goodwill and decency, hamstrung by their social environment, is shown, too.

"On Whitman Avenue" has just about everything in it. For most of the New York drama critics, it has too much. The critics did not like the play. But the audiences do. The night I saw it, people laughed, cried, and applauded all the way through. Negroes are particularly moved by this play. To us it is almost too real. We forget it is just a play.

About Homeless Vet

THE STORY concerns a young Negro war veteran whose wife is about to have a child. They cannot find a home until the college-girl sister of the white soldier, whose life the Negro has saved, rents them the second floor apartment in her parents' two-family house. When the Negroes move into the formerly all-white neighborhood, then the fireworks begin. These fireworks are enough to blow up a theatre. No wonder the New York critics had their good judgment blown right out of their heads when they saw "On Whitman Avenue," since it faces the major problem of our times more frankly than any Broadway play of the season.

New York critics seem to think this play is only about our race problem. But what the play is really about is the inability of the average American to even try to understand anybody's problem save his own. If white America cannot deal decently with fellow black Americans after living with them for three hundred years, how can America understand Russia, or Korea, or Ethiopia? And the development of such understanding is the major problem of our time—since world peace depends on it.

Canada Lee heads a splendid cast which includes Will Geer and Hilda Vaughn, two of the finest white actors in the American theatre. Abbie Mitchell, whose distinguished career extends from Chicago's old Pekin Theatre through Williams and Walker musical comedies, to Europe and the concert stage and back again to drama, plays the mother. It is a pleasure to see this grand personality again on Broadway. Three excellent child actors, one Negro, two white, carry on the inter-racial conflict on the juvenile level. And Donald Oenslager has given the drama a beautiful setting, the interior and exterior of a simple but charming suburban house.

Other Negro Dramas

MAXINE WOOD'S play, "On Whitman Avenue" ranks high in the social drama of our day, and it takes its place in a long line of fine plays — "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "In Abraham's Bosom," "Stevedore," "Big White Fog," "Deep Are The Roots"—that our theatre has given as its contribution toward a solution of our ever dramatic race problem.

"Deep Are The Roots" is still running, and should be put on your summer list if you haven't seen it. It is a bang-up good play. And that much discussed musical, "St. Louis Woman" is in town for your pleasure. It is a charming and colorful folk-song-like version of St. Louis in the gay nineties when Negro jockeys were kings of the turf. That great dancing team, the bounding Nicholas Brothers, and that big boy of stage and screen, Rex Ingram, are in it, along with some new people who are terrific. One is the leading lady, Ruby Hill, who is as pretty as a picture and can put a heart-tug into a song. Another is Pearl Bailey, the nearest thing to Ethel Waters that our present younger generation has produced, and a dynamic comedy personality in her own right. And a third amazing new-comer is Enid William, a pantomime humorist who is a knock-out.

For the Negro, this has been a good season on Broadway. These three shows, I hope, will go on into next season. But there were notable failures this winter whose good intentions cannot be doubted. "Strange Fruit" and "Jeb" didn't come off, although both had good casts and good intentions. And Katherine Dunham's "Carib Song" fell by the wayside, too, in spite of her amazing dancers. For a complete account on "THE NEGRO ON BROADWAY, 1945-1946" read Miles Jefferson's excellent article in the current issue of the Atlanta University Quarterly, PHYLON.

'On Whitman Avenue' Celebrates a Birthday

Daily Worker - Thursday 8-1-46-6
New York, N.Y.

By Samuel Sillen

HAVING fought its way through a barrage of hostile and ignorant press notices, On Whitman Avenue will play its 100th performance at Saturday's matinee. After 13 weeks on Broadway, the play is going strong. It will probably continue until the fall, when the sponsors of the production expect to launch it on a coast-to-coast tour.

This is cause for congratulation all around. The producers of Maxine Wood's forthright and timely play demonstrated what can be done when you carry a fight to the people. The audiences have intelligently defied the judgment of those reviewers who tried to kill a work that hits out against anti-Negro bigotry, literally a life-or-death question in this country today. The success of **On Whitman Avenue**, despite heavy odds, is a tonic for the whole progressive cultural movement.

The play opened with two strikes against it. Forced to open toward the end of the season, which is hazardous for anything but the lightest musicals, **On Whitman Avenue** has grown rather than declined in the summer season.

Business was weak at first. Undoubtedly, the average producer would not have tried to buck the reviewers and what appeared to be public indifference.

But Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, co-producers, believed deeply in what this drama had to say. They had faith that once the public began to see this work, once its impact began to be felt, the audience story would change.

So they went out and fought for it. When Canada Lee was not playing the role of David Bennett, he was appearing on every radio program he could line up. And he saw to it that the conversation always got around to the theme of **On Whitman Avenue.** Mark Marvin, meanwhile, circularized the membership of unions and other progressive organizations.

Lee and Marvin arranged theater parties, booked speaking appearances and generally aroused interest among people who are not usually considered part of the Broadway audience. After a while the best press agent for the play was the play itself.

Progressive newspapers like the author, producers astonished (and delighted) to learn that you have **Voice** and the Daily Worker also played their part in seeing to it that **On Whitman Avenue** reached an audience that it deserved. The author also played like **The People's** on socialism; I know too much about it; and the and members of the cast of **On Whitman Avenue** 20,000 circulation and can count on 50,000 when you have thanked the Daily Worker for our solid support. To which we answer: It has been a pleasure, and we are glad to assure similar support. "But don't ask me to write about it. I'd rather for every play that deals boldly and truthfully and die. Very likely I shall." convincingly about the real life of the American people today. There seems to be some doubt about that.

A final note in connection with this 100th performance on Saturday. The play is paying off at the box office. In June the producers were able to begin paying off on the original investment.

The labor and people's movement constitutes an enormous potential audience. Mobilized, this audience is a powerful factor to reckon with in the cultural world no less than in the political world; it can push a play or a book across just as it can win an election. The experience with **On Whitman Avenue** should spur the progressive movement to find those forms necessary to insure active audience participation in behalf of people's art and, conversely, in opposition to reactionary plays, films, books, radio programs, etc.

* * *

FOOTNOTE on George Bernard Shaw: Shaw contributes greetings to **Labor Monthly,** British Marxist magazine edited by R. Palme Dutt, on its 25th anniversary. Writing in the July, 1946, issue, Shaw says:

"I subscribe faithfully to the **Labor Monthly;** but I never read it. I cannot read books or articles on socialism; I know too much about it; and the writers mostly know too little.

'On Whitman Avenue'

PM, New York, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

We were shocked and disappointed at the reception given *On Whitman Avenue* by yours and other New York critics. Its stay in Detroit was a long and successful one. . . . The problem presented was one commonly heard of, but this pointed and truthful exposure spurred the needed interest in the problem. It started people *thinking*. Immediately civic groups began requesting Canada Lee to speak for them and *highly* recommended the play to their bodies. . . . We suggest that the experts who so hurriedly ravaged this play see it again . . . and think.

HERMAN MOSS
RALPH FOON
MEYER ESTRIN
VERA ESTRIN
VITA MOSKOVITCH
NORMAN MOSKOVITCH

Detroit

Mon. 5-20-46

Mr. Kronenberger's review has given me many misgivings . . . As a practicing psychiatrist, I feel it is important that we not only treat illnesses of the mind but also some of the sociological factors which are basic in producing conflict . . . It is unfortunate that dramatic critics find it necessary to see and feel more than the average individual. I hope that the adverse comments made by your paper will not influence people from supporting a play which has such a fine message and which can "act out" so many feelings of so many people who have been inarticulate . . .

Detroit LOUIS A. SCHWARTZ, M.D.

Mon. 5-20-46

I have seen *On Whitman Avenue* and have been tremendously moved by it both as drama of a high order and as an important social message. . . . Mr. Kronenberger's review (is) surprisingly unsympathetic and unfair . . .

New York DONALD STEPHENS

* * *

. . . Criticisms of this kind . . . encourage the perpetuation of plays about trivia which are easy to produce from the construction standpoint and discourage the production of plays with important social themes which, by the nature of their subject matter, are much more difficult to project onto the stage . . .

New York

FRANK E. KARELSEN, JR.

* * *

. . . Most of the New York critics have done a grave injustice . . .

New York DWIGHT J. BRADLEY

Director
Religious Associates, NCPAC

* * *

. . . Kronenberger's review led us to expect an amateur show. We saw, instead, a powerful drama which portrayed an important current problem . . .

New York DAVID WEISMAN

* * *

It is impossible to believe that Mr. Kronenberger saw *On Whitman Avenue* before he wrote his review. . . . I am writing this in protest against "damning with faint praise" such a tremendously moving play. . . . I hope that readers will go and see for themselves . . .

New York MARTHA WEISMAN

See Louis Kronenberger, Page 20, and Albert Deutsch, Page 16. —ED. *5-20-46*

Whitman Avenue Receives Plaque

People's Voice

A plaque will be presented to the author, producers and cast of **On Whitman Avenue** by the Citizens Committee of the Upper West Side for their significant contribution to interracial understanding in their production of this play. The entire company, together with Maxine Wood, Canada Lee and Mark Marvin will be honored at a reception on Saturday evening, June 15, in the penthouse of Dr. and Mrs. Hirshfield. Many distinguished guests will be present. *N.Y.*

Entertainment will be provided by Larry Winters of **Call Me Mister**, Mary Lou Williams of **Cafe Society**, Ellis Larken of **Blue Angel**, Hal Horton of **Song of Norway** and many others. An admission charge which covers refreshments will be collected at the door. The address is 175 W 93 st. *Sat. 6-15-46*

'On Whitman Avenue' Vitally Important

Daily Worker, New York, N.Y.

New York

Editor, Daily Worker:

The new play at the Cort Theatre, **On Whitman Avenue**, starring Canada Lee, could not be more timely. It deals with one of the most foreboding clouds upon our national horizon—one that calls for both thought and action now. *Fri. 5-24-46*

I found it so interesting, so moving and so vitally important that I am urging others to see it as soon as possible and to tell their friends to see it.

ETHEL CLYDE.

Sepia-Produced Opus Hits B'way

Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa.

By IZZY

NEW YORK—Canada Lee's new starring vehicle, "On Whitman Avenue," came to New York's Main Street last week, and while it isn't one of the worst propaganda plays we ever saw, still misses the mark insofar as solutions for segregation are concerned. Its characters are believable, its scenes are positive replicas of everyday life, and it serves the purpose of once more bringing a phase of the race question out for an airing, but like all others to date, there it stops! Again, no solution offered!

We, as Negroes, in our daily lives, run across practically any problem which has been or can be presented on any stage, and members of the white race do the same. There's no particular edification in seeing it enacted by others rather than ourselves, the only education one can receive from an evening spent thus, is a solution at the end, or the beginning or anywhere the author sees fit, just so he tells us somewhere what we can do to remedy the sickness of segregation. It isn't enough to jerk a few tears, and receive the plaudits of well-wishers with the satisfied feeling that something has been accomplished. It hasn't been, because the people who don't abide by the principles of democracy never go to see plays which hold them and their kind up to the light of public opinion. The people who turn out are the ones who are probably already doing all in their power to make the world a better place for all races and creeds to live in. *5-18-46*

CAME TOO LATE

But regardless of all this, "On Whitman Avenue" isn't too bad, and as Canada Lee's first production venture may not prove too disastrous. It's unfortunate however, that it should have come along at the tail end of a season which has seen a series of propaganda plays, and which has seen all but one fall by the wayside. And it isn't that "Deep Are the Roots" is so much better written, acted or produced than the others, simply that it happened to be the first one to hit Broadway and consequently caught critics and public alike before they became satiated.

TOP CAST

Casting is excellent from Mr. Lee, whose choked pleas for tolerance bring many a lump to sympathetic throats, right down the list of actors which includes Will Greer as the timorous but kindhearted landlord, Ernestine Barrier as his "What will the neighbors say" wife; dynamic Perry Wilson as the young daughter who doesn't give a tinker's dam about the rules of society insofar as discrimination is concerned, and who starts the whole thing by renting her family's upstairs apartment to a Negro family. Martin Miller as Johnny, the tough little youngster who defies all the principles of human decency to follow the paths of grown-up bigots; Augustus Smith as Gramp Bennett; Vivienne Barber as Wini Bennett; Kenneth Terry as Bernie Lund; Hilda Vaughn as Aurie Anderson; Abbie Mitchell as Cora Bennett; Robert Simon as Walter Lund, and Jean Cleveland as his wife, Ellen; in fact, every role was excellently cast and left little room for improvement.

The play was written by Maxine Wood and directed by Margo Jones. Mark Marvin was co-producer with Canada Lee, in association with George McClain. Settings and lighting were by Donald Oenslager. *5-18-46*

Critics on most of the daily papers were not too kind in their criticism, with most inclined to definitely turn thumps down on the new opus, which brings us back to one of our statements, "On Whitman Avenue" simply wasn't lucky enough to get there "fustest with the mostest." *Sat.*

IWO versus PM on "On Whitman Avenu

Daily Worker

New

Editor, Daily Worker:

I was very shocked to see IWO criticism of Louis Kronenberger's review of "On Whitman Avenue." *N.Y. N.Y.*

I thought the review was excellent, not only because of it's judging of the play's merits as a play, but because it makes the exact point the IWO criticizes it for. Namely, that as a progressive play which studies a taboo subject, it has failed to bring anything important across to the audience. *Wednesday*

The people who see "On Whitman Avenue" are the people who do not have to be educated. They are the ones who already know and have tried to do something about it. *5-22-46*

It is true that Kronenberger could have been kinder and recommended the play just because it is progressive—but regardless, his criticism of the technical and social aspects of the play were entirely correct. *5-22-46*

I personally think that "On Whitman Avenue" was very good, considering that it is a first play and the plain fact that it talked freely about the Negro problem.

I don't entirely agree with Kronenberger, but I am ready to admit that he is right in many ways. SUSAN PEARLMAN.

Fight To Save Anti-Bias Play

Defender

N.Y. Groups Support 'On Whitman Ave.'

(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK—A group of progressive New Yorkers, headed by Canada Lee, were fighting this week to keep "On Whitman Avenue," a Broadway play outlining the evils of restrictive realty covenants, from closing.

In the fact of unfavorable reviews by New York drama critics, housing, theatrical, social and fraternal groups in Harlem have pooled their efforts to keep the issue of discriminatory and inadequate Negro housing before the public. Lee is co-producer of the play, with Mark Marvin, and also one of its stars. *6-1-46*

The campaigners are asking that theatre-goers weigh the play's social significance against the critics' disapproving reviews, based on grounds that "On Whitman Avenue" is not "good theatre." The majority of the critics themselves vouch for the vehicle's importance as a means of throwing light on the Negro housing problem.

Boon To Minorities *Chicago*

Following its review which took the play to task for technical deficiencies, the newspaper, PM, was besieged with so many protests that it published a number of the letters to let its readers know how important the play's survival was to members of minority groups and especially Negroes.

A mixed audience jammed the 135th Street Public Library last Friday to hear several downtown critics, housing experts and those connected with "Whitman Avenue," state their reasons why it should rate the support of the community.

Among those speaking were Margo Jones, director; Mark Marvin, producer, Abe Hill, author, producer; Vernon Rice, N.Y. Post critic; Arthur Pollack, Brooklyn Eagle critic; Dorothy Hamilton, health and housing secretary, Urban League; Cliff Davis, United Negro and Allied Veterans of America, and Marion Perry of the NAACP. *6-1-46 Sat.*

Answering many who have said that the play offers no solution to the problem as it now stands, Hill, head of the American Negro Theatre, asserted that authors do not unravel problems, but project them across to the masses for solution.

Father Bishop, minister of St. Phillips Church, has urged his congregation to attend the play. Donelan Phillips, head of the Consolidated Tenants League, Inc., said the full weight of his organization is behind the producers and purchased more than 300 tickets for league members.

'WHITMAN AVENUE' WILL CLOSE OCT. 5

Times

Maxine Wood's Racial Play to Leave Cort After Run of 173 Performances—Will Tour

New York, N.Y. Sat. 8-24-46

Maxine Wood's racial play, "On Whitman Avenue," is in its last weeks on Broadway, it was disclosed yesterday by Canada Lee and Mark Marvin, producers. The engagement at the Cort will be terminated on Oct. 5 and the attraction will be taken on an extensive road tour. For a while there had been talk that Miss Wood's work would be moved to another playhouse to allow "Lady Windermere's Fan" to open there on Oct. 14, but the Messrs. Lee and Marvin have decided otherwise. The production began its New York career early last May and will have been seen 173 times. Will Geer, Ernestine Barrier, Perry Wilson, Hilda Vaughn and Mr. Lee head the cast, directed by Margo Jones. No longer on the schedule of Mr. Lee and Mr. Marvin is "From Now On," Sam Hoffman's play.

Broadcast Honors "On Whitman Avenue"

The City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, in a broadcast May 28, named the play "On Whitman Avenue" as "an important contribution toward solution to America's race problem." Broadcast was in connection with Harlem Week. Left to right: Charles Abrams, National Housing Authority; Edith Alexander, Mayor's Committee on Unity; Frank E. Karelson Jr., City-Wide Committee; Maxine Wood, author of "On Whitman Avenue," and Canada Lee, the play's star.

"Whitman Avenue" a Play About White Inhumanity

Play Written by Young Northern Woman; Directed by Southerner; Has Mixed Cast

NEW YORK — (NNPA) — Canada Lee and Mark Marvin succeeded in bringing to Broadway their new, sharp-cutting play on interracial housing, called "On Whitman Avenue."

Not colorlessly racial like "Anna Lucasta," nor a romance of the old time like the revived "Show Boat," nor a story of the present day South as "Strange Fruit" and "Deep Are the Roots" are supposed to be, this drama revolving around a white residential area in the North is making a lot of playgoers electrically uncomfortable.

Written by Maxine Wood, a Detroit white girl, and directed by Margo Jones, a Southern white woman who also directs the long-standing hit, "The Glass Menagerie," the play is acted by an interracial cast headlined by Canada Lee himself and Will Greer, who won fame in "Tobacco Road."

Perry Wilson (left) and Abbie Mitchell during a friendly moment in "On Whitman Avenue."

Poses a Problem

It poses a problem of what follows when a broad-minded daughter of a middle-class white family (Perry Wilson), rents the upstairs apartment to a colored war veteran (Canada Lee), while her mother and father are down South on vacation.

Results are such that one Broadway critic says it "has the excitement that exhausts pulses" and another opines: "Here it is folks! The play on the color question for which we have all been waiting. It may be dynamite, for all we know."

As the story develops, the central white family is split wide open. The father sides with his rash daughter; the mother goes with the young son whose attitude has been conditioned by his Nazi-type pals in the neighborhood.

Unthinkable for Whites

Inevitably, there is the neighborhood meeting where, while conceding that the family is clean and respectable, the bigwigs of the community decide that just the thought of blacks in their midst is unthinkable, beside the danger to their property values.

Threats, veiled and open, are duly delivered by the spokesman for the real estate company (Robert Simon) that, by handling mortgages on homes and businesses, dictates to the conscience of the community. The drama whirls to a climax in a series of clashes and outbursts which force action against Lee's family, but not without a terrific rebound upon the whites.

"On Whitman Avenue" is more than a run-of-the-mill interracial drama. It cuts deep into the reasons for prejudice. It compels white people, both in the play and out, especially those who profess liberality about races, to make up their minds if it is real democracy they go for, and if they are willing to pay the price.

An Up-to-Date Theme

It is thoroughly up-to-date since the leading character is a veteran of the Pacific, caught in the toils of the present universal housing crisis and unable to find a place to live, even in the stuffed, unsanitary district earmarked for colored.

In this year of unlimited production and short shift for plays which cannot make the grade, "On Whitman Avenue" has already shown its wiriness and toughness by outlasting the usually fatal first week. By getting to Broadway at all, it completed a crusade during which money for its production and warm-up performances were accompanied by the greatest difficulties.

If it stays a while, as it should, thousands of Americans who take for granted the fact that they believe in justice for all are going to have the thrill of finding themselves severely tested, while being sharply entertained.

MORE ABOUT 'ON WHITMAN AVENUE'

Social Drama-- And Great Theatre!

By Dorothy Loeb

On Whitman Avenue isn't just a play we should support. It is a social play in the best sense of the theatre as presented in earlier periods by Shaw and Ibsen.

The play is genuinely dramatic. It is acceptable and believable. The lines are good theatre. There is a beginning, a development and a climax. But most of all, it deals with a real social problem on the level of the peoples' needs and interests today. If it only did that, it might be the didactic, author-type lecture vehicle that we have lamented in some other well-intentioned but poorly constructed plays.

But **On Whitman Avenue** meets the theatre's best requirements: interest, plot, drama, character development and point.

More than that, the play is honest and reveals the author to be courageous in using her talent as a fighting creative artist rather than as hack pandering to public prejudice or bourgeois-inspired demands for a "happy ending."

It might have been quite tempting for an author writing for Broadway to toy with the idea of letting at least Johnny, the little white boy, fight off chauvinist ideas and promote the false but bourgeois-fostered idea that youth, though living in a racist-atmosphere can grow up a part of a democratic community simply by writing themes on Einstein in school.

Yes, nice little boys like Johnny do go around in the Bronx, in Chelsea, in Greenwich Village, in Queens, in Red Hook and all over this blessed city and country of ours mouthing the chauvinist and anti-Semitic utterances of their elders. And **On Whitman Avenue** shows where it comes from. And it doesn't pull punches in dealing with its source—though it goes only as far as the realty corporation that owns the Lawndale Development and rules the roost in the business community. But that's the closest that any written word, apart from the Communist, has come to breaking the news in public on how imperialism and its tools spread superman ideology.

In Tony and her father the author did a good job, too. You don't only get strength. You get idealism and a middle class morality in dealing with Negroes that can collapse easy under stiff community

"On Whitman Avenue Ends 100th Performance

NEW YORK — (ANP) — Coming veterans of every race with the gratulatory telegrams received her current anti-Negro drive in the Last Saturday by Canada Lee and South. Last Saturday, performance Mark Marvin, producers of "Oimarked the 100th presentation Whitman Avenue," linked the Max since its opening last May.

Typical of the congratulatory messages was that received from

Daily Worker

'OTHELLO': "Would to God I'd never seen it," cries Desdemona (Joan Copeland) as the Moor (P. Jay Sidney) drives at her with questions about a cherished handkerchief. The "good" Iago (Jay Barney, right) watches quietly in this scene from Equity Library Theater's production of *Othello*, opening tonight at Hudson Park Library, 10 Seventh Ave. South. It will be repeated tomorrow and Wednesday evenings and Thursday afternoon. Tickets, which are free, should be obtained in advance at the library. The group is proud of getting *Othello* on the boards for $117.87. The Theatre Guild *Othello*, it points out, cost over $75,000.

Miniature Version of 'Otello'

A mixed cast of white and Negro artists will present a miniature production of Verdi's *Otello* for one performance in the auditorium of the Riverside Plaza Hotel on Thursday evening, Apr. 11. This is the first program in a series designed to produce grand opera without the expense of a full company, settings, chorus and orchestra. The leading singer in the group is Paul A. Smith who sang *Otello* with the Salmaggi Opera Co. at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn last year.

Vories Fisher

HILDA SIMMS

The Capulets will be colored.

Romeo & Juliet turned out to be the victims of color prejudice. Broadway Director Harry Wagstaff Gribble saw it that way, and so prepared to produce the tragedy with colored Capulets and white Montagues. The new Juliet: beauteous Hilda Simms, currently the title-role streetwalker in *Anna Lucasta.*

Philly And Broadway First

Producer Eliminates Small Town Trials

By ROB ROY

NEW YORK—There'sll be no Hinterland-trials for "Romeo and Juliet" the proposed Broadway drama starring Hilda Simms and Dick Angarola, according to Harry S. Gribble, the opus' producer.

Mr. Gribble, in a statement to this writer, made it plain that his plans call for the omitting of such trial engagements. "We have every confidence in our performers, who are all tried and proven actors and the story we are giving them can't miss. We will open in Philly, or Boston, haven't decided yet, and then on to a waiting Broadway," he confided.

As in "Deep Are the Roots" and the late "A Young American," the production will feature a love romance with mixed cast. Difference of course is that the male will be white and the object of his affections (Hilda Simms) Negro.

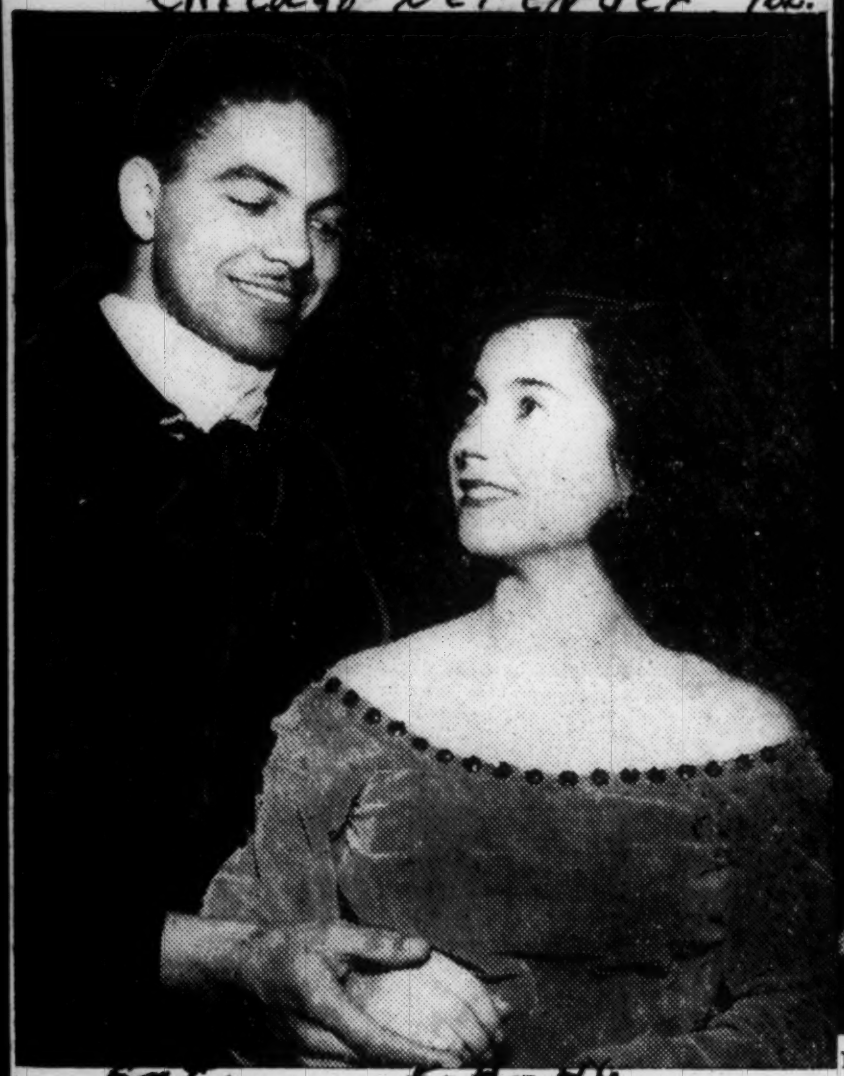
Families of the performers will be mixed also with most of the roles played by whites.

Mr. Gribble assured his production the tops in acting by signing several of the players he formerly directed in "Anna Lucasta." Besides Miss Simms he claims to have Frederick O'Neal who stands out as "Frank," the eldest brother in "Lucasta" and Earl Hyman who is "Rudolph" in the same play. He also claims to have secured other stars who have proved their ability in various shows already seen on Broadway.

There will be some casting for parts in the play, soon to be announced, the director announced this week. However, it is whispered along Broadway that the show cannot think of rehearsals until some of the performers, now under contract to others are free.

Inter-Racial 'Romeo And Juliet' Strikes A Blow For Democracy

Chicago Defender 1st.



"Romeo and Juliet" will become an experiment in democracy at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, when an inter-racial cast will present the famed Shakespearian tragedy May 1 and 2.

If reaction is favorable future productions of the Wisconsin Players, campus dramatic group, will be cast in a similar manner. —Photos by Gary Schulz.

With parts cast solely on the basis of merit, the part of Romeo fell to Stanley Hebert, Milwaukee sophomore. Above, he is shown (photo left) in a scene with Nancy Frankel who portrays Juliet. Center, Theodore Coggs of Milwaukee, as the Prince, scolds Lorraine Dalejos of Antigo, Wis., in a tense moment from the drama. At right, Fred Licht, of Holland, as Count Paris; Mary Burke, Washington sophomore as Lady Capulet, and Lowell Ebel, California, as Lord Capulet in a scene from the third act. Director of the play is Ned Donohoe, who will study public reaction to the experiment for use in his speech department thesis.

66b 1946

"Draft Robeson" Drive Continues

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—The public's concerted efforts to draft Paul Robeson to play the leading role of Dorothy Heyward's new play, "Set My People Free," has brought no decision from the popular stage, screen and radio star.

However, Mr. Robeson, who has been studying the text is expected to give his decision within a week or two. Sat. 8-10-46

Joining individual pleas, a number of newspapers have carried editorials on the subject, urging others to write Mr. Robeson asking him to accept.

"Set My People Free" is the story of Denmark Vesey, a slave, and his struggle to break the shackles of slavery with a resurrection in South Carolina.

Mr. Robeson, it is pointed out, is best equipped to enact the role of Vesey because his whole life is dedicated to the present day struggle against oppression.

66b 1946 Plays ("Strange Fruit")

Amsterdam Blasts "Fruit" in Editorial

By Fredi Washington People's Voice 1-26-46

THE MOST SCURRILOUS piece of writing I have seen for a long time is the vicious attack on the play **Strange Fruit** in the editorial column of the **Amsterdam News** tabloid issue, January 19. The attack was evidently brought on by the closing of the play last Saturday night since the editorial writer in his last paragraph said: **"New York City is to be congratulated for having had the good taste to stay away in large numbers and we hope everybody who had anything to do with perpetrating this slander lost a lot of money."**

Mind you, I do not take exception to the fact that this writer has a personal, adverse opinion of Strange Fruit. That is his prerogative. What I do object to, is the use of such editorial space to denounce a play when American organized workers are fighting the greatest battle of their careers to retain the gains already made, and for their right to a decent wage commensurate with the cost of living today. There are some 1,500,000 workers throughout the country in practically all major industries, now on strike, with more joining the picket lines daily. This is probably one of the most critical periods which will face us in our lifetime; and yet, the editorial writers of the **Amsterdam News** could seem to find nothing better than a play to write about.

When the drama critic of the Amsterdam roundly panned **Strange Fruit** because he didn't think it a good play and it's social content was not to his liking, that was okay.

When Don Le Leighbur (that is a fictitious name scrambled out of the letters of one of the top writer's names) tried to make a case against Walter White because his daughter took a part in the show in addition to using some pretty strong phraseology against the play, that was okay too. They were personal opinions and though you might have disagreed with those opinions, you didn't have the right to criticize the writers for them.

But editorial space, that is something else again. **What is particularly vicious about the Amsterdam's editorial, is the fact that the writer has gone to great pains to pick from the play dialogue which is most uncomplimentary to the Negro without ever referring to the social content of the play. It would seem that the writer was not concerned with a social analysis of the play but rather used the space to get off a personal grudge against Lillian Smith, the author; Jose Ferrer, the producer-director; and the members of the cast—thirty-four in all.**

When you realize the kind of gossipy news which "lowrates" Negro women, emanating week in and week out from **Back Door**, and some of the news sections of the paper, then you wonder how an **Amsterdam** editorial can afford to become so indignant on the subject and talk thusly: "Nonnie just happens to be a convenient slop-jar in which he (Tracy) be-fouls himself in the same sort of a way a baby messes in his pants to make his mama mad." **Whoever the editorial writer is, he managed to stoop to one of the lowest levels ever reached in editorial comment.**

For the life of me, I can see very little difference between the reasoning of the **Amsterdam's** editorial and that of our good friend Bilbo. Listen to what Bilbo said about **Strange Fruit: "I would be ashamed to attend such a performance. I have read the book by that outstanding white quisling of the south who has repudiated her native heath, her race and the integrity of her blood in writing the vilest and dirtiest book of this generation."** Says the **Amsterdam's** editorial, **"Strange Fruit, the play, will shut up Jan. 19, and it's good riddance to bad rubbish. Of all the stinking slanders on the Negro ever palmed off by our "friends" as a "contribution to the solution of the race problem," this opus by Lillian Smith undoubtedly takes the cake for insult and slyness."**

Now if you will, listen to what Paul Robeson said about the play's meaning: **"For me, it is a prophetic play; here colored people of high quality suffer the terrible frustrations of a prejudice-ridden society. Sam's last speech is clear warning we can't take it anymore. America should heed this."**

This statement comes from a man whose very name is filled with hope for a better world by countless Negroes throughout the country. Why? **Because Robeson fights the battle of the Negro and the little peoples of the world—not because he is paid to do so (he receives not one red copper) but because he knows he is a part of the downtrodden people, and it is his belief that unless the masses are freed, he will never be free.**

Robeson consistently has taken open forthright stands for the little people against the powerful people. He has time and again, jeopardized his movie, theatre and concert career by his fearless fight. Here is judgment worthy of respect.

Look boys, when you write editorials such as you wrote last week, it looks as though you are ducking the important issues of the day and into the bargain, **it appears that you don't give a hoot what happens to the people.** How about tailoring your editorials to the needs of the people? For instance, explain to them how the strikes affect them in their every day life; where they can get meat for their tables without hurting the cause of the meat worker's strike.

By God, there is a job to be done in this community and it takes us all to do it. Let us stop raring back in our swivel chairs criticizing those who are trying to better conditions, while doing nothing ourselves. But rather let us get into the struggle which affects us all. If you give the people true facts, advise them honestly and sincerely how they can become first class citizens, you will find there is very little time or space left for such editorials as "Good Riddance."

Won't you please leave the criticism of plays, even those with social content, to the drama editors? That is what we are paid for, you know.

The cast of Strange Fruit.

Strange Fruit's Anderson Family **The closing of Lillian Smith's social drama caused The Amsterdam News, through its editorial columns, to shout hosannas. Pictured here are George Oliver, Jane White and Dorothy Carter, three members of the large mixed cast of thirty-four, who now will have to seek other sources of income. George Oliver and Ellsworth Wright (not shown) are but two of the cast members who served in the armed services of this country. Wright, spent almost four years in the South Pacific and holds a Presidential Citation and a Purple Heart.**

TO OUR PUBLIC:

We, the members of the cast of "Strange Fruit", protest the editorial which appeared in the January 19th issue of the Amsterdam News. It deliberately misrepresented the values of the play by selecting certain lines and distorting them to suit an editorial intent. We believe that "Strange Fruit" shows the processes and effects of racial bigotry. How else can we combat these evils than by an honest re-

Advertisement

'Strange Fruit' Fosters Old Bourbon Ideology

Manhattan, N. Y.

Editor, Daily Worker:

I am a native of Alabama, now in New York, and have seen the plays, **Deep Are the Roots** and **Strange Fruit**. The first I found to be very good, with the exception that the intermarriage issue is not basic at the moment. But I found **Strange Fruit** to be an intolerable portrayal of relations between the two basic groups in the South—the Negro people and the white workers.

How the Daily Worker and progressives who are generally influenced by the Communist Party have been able to excuse support and backing for this play is very difficult to understand. I, and many other progressive Southerners, believe that progress in the South can come only by a growing unity between the white workers and the Negro people. We believe they are natural allies. But your paper was backing a play that serves to drive a wedge further between these two groups by fostering the old bourbon ideology of laying the responsibility for lynching and other prejudices and discriminatory pratcices to the white workers. This claim is, of course, false. I believe any informed person would agree. And since the big job is to build a unity between the two groups, it is quite confusing to have a paper like yours back a production like **Strange Fruit**.

P. E. N.

Gordon Defends Position On Strange Fruit

Manhattan, N. Y.

Editor, Daily Worker:

J. L. Barman in the Daily Worker of Feb. 1 said that Eugene Gordon, in a review of the play **Strange Fruit**:

1. Wrote "in a typical 'liberal' fashion," saying "it is and it ain't," regarding the Lillian Smith drama.

2. Recognized it is "carrying a dangerous falsehood," yet campaigned for its continuation and deplored that it is closing for lack of public support."

3. Sought "to foster the old bourbon tale that it is the white workers who are primarily the lynchers of Negroes."

It is easy to show whether J. L. Barman is telling the truth. Here is what I wrote, as published on the Daily Worker feature page, Jan. 12:

"The fundamental issue of the play is that segregation and Jim-crow are horrible crimes against the American people, because they do lead inevitably to 'blackbelt' and ghetto areas in our cities. The play mumbles confusedly in stating the issue, but does state it. That is important.

"The play is weak also, as is the novel, in its assertion that the 'riffraff' and the 'millworkers' are the chronic lynchers, while 'respectable' men like millowners are the Negro protectors. This is a dangerous falsehood because it contains enough truth to seem plausible.

"It is true that some white workers do participate in lynching bees, but it is also true that the 'respectable' leaders of the community set the pattern and enforce it. It is the 'respectable' upper classes which determine where the Negro should live—OR WHETHER HE SHOULD LIVE."

So much for what I said and what J. L. Barman misquoted me as saying. Now, why did I add that, despite these "real weaknesses," I felt that the play was "definitely worth seeing"? Because:

1. The father of little black Henry tells not only the mother but tells the world why he resents his boy's being whipped into submission to a "master-race."

2. The town's crippled moron, drinking at the public fountain "for whites only" while Sam Harris, the Negro doctor, passes humbly by, shouts aloud the utter rottenness of the South's Jim-crow system.

3. Dr. Sam Harris makes one of the best speeches ever heard in a play about Southern life—a damning, electric, searing attack on master-race hypocrisy, ripping it to shreds.

4. I agree with Paul Robeson's estimate of **Strange Fruit**. He said, in part: "For me it is a prophetic play; here colored people of high quality suffer the terrible frustrations of a prejudice-ridden society. Sam's last speech is clear warning we can't take it any more."

Is J. L. Barman against these positive factors of the play?

Or is he against any such play that is not 100 percent good?

EUGENE GORDON.

Story of Earl Jones --- Mississippi to B'way

By ANN SEYMOUR

In early depression years, a Mississippi farm lad, a sharecropper's son looking for a job, swung onto a freight train headed North. Today, that Negro farm boy is a Broadway star. He is Earl Jones, who appeared as Henry, the innocent lynch victim, in Lillian Smith's **Strange Fruit**.

EARL JONES

"got a job being King Belshazzar" in Katharine Cornell's biblical play, **Herod and Miriamne.**

The Suitcase Theater venture had other important results for Earl Jones. Through it, he met Langston Hughes, the distinguished Negro poet, who in turn introduced him to his aunt, Toy Hopper.

"She taught me the fundamentals of executing simple poems about Negro life," says the actor seriously. "Their very simplicity is their strength," he adds.

POETRY READING

So Earl Jones began a career of poetry reading, usually for progressive groups and committees, along with his acting.

When the war came, Earl Jones' stage career was cut short. "I had to do my part in the people's war," he explains gravely, "so when I was rejected as a soldier I trained myself to be a welder."

Last year, however, Mr. Jones went back to the theater, this time to Broadway, to create the part of Blossom, a Basuto soldier, in **The Hasty Heart.** That part, said Max Yergan, was done with "beauty and dignity."

He remained with **The Hasty Heart** till it closed at the end of last season. This season he was persuaded by producer-director Jose Ferrer of **Strange Fruit** to take the part of Henry.

His inspiration is from the people—he is one of them. His message is to the people—as he puts it himself, "to all categories, but especially the common people and Negro people."

Drop up to see Earl Jones in his apartment on West 99th Street, and he will meet you at the door himself. He is a big young man, six feet two and a half inches tall, and proportioned accordingly. He has a fine sense of humor, and you won't talk to him long without hearing his great, booming laughter. But when he discusses poetry or the theater, he is very serious.

The young actor tells with a flicker of amusement how he first came to New York, by mistake. "I meant to go to Boston, and got as far as Albany, but came to New York by grabbing the wrong freight train."

WPA TEACHER

Then followed a considerable period of unemployment. His first job was as a WPA teacher, giving social guidance to cellar clubs in Harlem, directing youth to NYA jobs. One of the groups he sponsored, the Harlem Youth Club, which was later to become part of the Youth Section of the International Workers' Order, decided to put on a play.

"As adult sponsor, I got them to do a one-act play by Langston Hughes, in poem style, depicting the life of Negroes in America from 1619 to the 20's. I had to understudy for everybody, in case anybody dropped out. One lad got himself a job, so I had to do his part. It was my first experience acting."

The play was put on in a loft at 317 West 125th Street, without scenery. It was a hit, the beginning of the "Suitcase Theater." The little show stayed in the loft for the rest of the year, then moved into the 125th Street Public Library for the following season.

Thus Earl Jones' acting career was launched. That same year he

LILLIAN SMITH, author of *Strange Fruit*, gave a luncheon party recently at the Algonquin for the kid actors appearing in her play at the Royal. She is shown above with two of the youngest: Betty Lou Keim, 7, and Juan Jose Hernandez, 5.

Photo by Ray Platnick, PM.

'STRANGE FRUIT' WORTH SEEING DESPITE WEAKNESS

BY EUGENE GORDON

Strange Fruit, the Lillian Smith play at the Royal Theatre, seems slated for an early closing unless further audience support is forthcoming. I saw the play for the first time the other night. While it is rambling and confused, I believe it attempts to say important things which warrant support.

The fundamental issue of the play is that segregation and Jim-crow are horrible crimes against the American people, because they do lead inevitably to "blackbelt" and ghetto areas in our cities. The play mumbles confusedly in stating the issue, but it does state it. That is important.

The play is weak also, as is the novel, in its assertion that the "riff-raff" and the "millworkers" are the chronic lynchers, while "respectable" men like millowners are the Negro protectors. This is a dangerous falsehood because it contains enough truth to seem plausible.

It is true that some white workers do participate in lynching-bees, but it is also true that the "respectable" leaders of the community set the pattern and enforce it. It is the "respectable" upper classes which determine where the Negro should live—**or whether he should live.**

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There's Nothing Strange About Acting Of 'Strange Fruit's' Earl Jones

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Ill
Sat 2-2-46

NEW YORK—In early depression years, a Mississippi farm lad, a sharecropper's son looking for a job, swung onto a freight train headed North. Today, that farm boy is starring on Broadway. He is Earl Jones, currently appearing as Henry, the innocent lynch victim, in Lillian Smith's "Strange Fruit," shortly to go on a nation-wide tour.

On the face of it, Earl Jones' career sounds like one of those breath-taking success stories they make so much of on Broadway. As a matter of fact, though, he's a down-to-earth guy.

Drop up to see him in his apartment on West 99th street, and he will meet you at the door himself.

He has a fine sense of humor, and you won't talk to him long without hearing his great, booming laughter. But when he discusses poetry or the theater, he is very serious.

His one-room apartment is modest, slightly cluttered with papers and good books and phonograph records. There's also a little kitchen, where he will make coffee or mix a hospitable highball while you talk.

The young actor tells with a flicker of amusement how he first came to New York, by mistake. "I meant to go to Boston, and got as far as Albany, but came to New York by grabbing the wrong freight train."

Then followed a considerable period of unemployment. His first job was as a WPA teacher, giving social guidance to cellar clubs in Harlem and directing youth to NYA jobs. One of the groups he sponsored, the Harlem Youth Club, decided to put on a play.

"As adult sponsor, I got them to do a one-act play by Langston Hughes, in poem style, depicting the life of Negroes in America from 1619 to the 20s. I had to understudy for everybody, in case anybody dropped out. It was my first experience acting."

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Thus, Earl Jones' acting career was launched. That same year he "got a job being King Belshazzar" in Katharine Cornell's biblical play, "Herod and Miriamne."

The Suitcase Theater venture had other important results for Earl Jones. Through it, he met Langston Hughes, the distinguished poet who, in turn, introduced him to his aunt, Toy Hopper.

"She taught me the fundamentals of executing simple poems about Negro life," says the actor seriously. "Their very simplicity is their strength," he adds.

So Earl Jones began a career of poetry reading, usually for progressive groups and committees, along with his acting. His favorite poems were those by Langston Hughes, "because he, more than any other Negro poet, has written things that are powerful for their simplicity, and eligible for mass understanding." He also often recites the poems of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Weldon Johnson, and Countee Cullen.

Mr. Jones' love for poetry and the theater is deeply part of him. In the middle of an afternoon with his friends, he is likely to begin reading poetry aloud, simply because he like to. And as to the theater, "The greatest kick I get," he says, "is in seeing shows and watching the actors. I like to picture myself doing all kinds of parts. I love the little things an actor does."

Sat 2-2-46

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Last year, however, Mr. Jones went back to the theater, this time to Broadway, to create the part of Blossom, a Basuto soldier, in "The Hasty Heart."

He remained with "The Hasty Heart" 'till it closed at the end of the last season. This season he was persuaded by Producer-Director Jose Ferrer of "Strange Fruit" to take the part of Henry.

Lillian Smith Says:

I'm No Reformer

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md
Sat. 6-29-46

By WARD MOREHOUSE
(Condensed from the New York Sun)

CLAYTON, Ga.—Lillian Smith lives on a north Georgia mountain, and she also owns it. The mountain, called Old Screamer, is the scene where she worked for seven years in the Little Rock House writing her best-selling novel, "Strange Fruit," and another year and a half making a play of it.

When the news got around that her play was to be done on Broadway, the people of Clayton decided to go into show business.

Miss Smith's favorite taxi driver put in $1,000, laying down cash on the line. Her cook invested $50 and her truck driver $500, giving her the money in $5 and $10 bills.

Approximately $43,000 of the $102,000 production cost of "Strange Fruit" was contributed by Southerners.

Not a Reformer

Miss Smith told me "I'm not the reformer everybody insists I am. I think being called a crusader has hurt me most.

"A few years ago we had few educated colored people. Now we have 70,000 and they are articulate. We must realize that if we educate them, we cannot segregate them. I have had colored friends from Atlanta here in my home.

"'Strange Fruit' was not a propaganda play; it wasn't a play about colored people. It was a play about white culture and I was saying that our culture might collapse if it goes along dry-rotted as it has. I was trying to probe into the lives of all of us," she said.

Claims Conspiracy in Barring Musical Version of Harriett Stowe's Slave Novel

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — The now-defunct musical version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which was banned from showing last Sept. and Oct. in Bridgeport, New Haven, Conn., and Springfield, Ill., is bidding for another performance, this time in the New York State Supreme Court.

1-9-46

Reed Lawton, its producer, has filed suit for $100,000 damages against three organizations which he claims conspired to close the play.

Named in the suit are Philip Murray, CIO president; William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party; and Arthur B. Spingarn, president of the NAACP.

Says Play Maligned

Lawton charges that the play, originally scheduled to open in Bridgeport last September at the Klein Memorial, municipally-owned auditorium, was maligned as being anti-colored by the defendants, who organized a picket line which adversely affected the ticket sale and intimidated theatre owners into canceling performances.

Although Controller Perry W. Rodman of Brideport banned the play following protests by colored groups, CIO, and Pastors' Association, Mayor Jasper McLevy, refusing to yield to pressure, ordered the show to go on.

It was booked for three days with a line of 30 colored pickets patrolling each of the three performances which grossed only $1500.

Contends Charges False

Jacob Taylor, colored labor leader, who at that time took responsibility for sparking the CIO resolution, banning the show, called it "the beginning of a war to stop the practice of clowning at the expense of racial traits."

The plaintiff contends that the racial charges were false and malicious, and that since the picketing had no relation to employee's working conditions, it was done solely to destroy his (Lawton's) business.

2-9-46

On Oct. 22, Springfield, the home town and burial place of Abraham Lincoln, banned the play which was to have been presented at the Orpheum Theatre. Mayor J. W. Kapp ordered the theatre management to cancel the booking.

'Uncle Tom' Producer Sues NAACP, CIO For $100,000

Chicago Defender

NEW YORK—Price for "Uncle Tom's Cabin" this week was set at $100,000.

1 lot.

Producer of the show, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Reed Lawton filed for $100,000 damages against Philip Murry, CIO president; William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist party and Arthur B. Spingarn, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Lawton charged that his "Uncle Tom" had been called anti-Negro by the CIO, NAACP and the Communist party. Picket lines and adverse publicity, he said, had affected the ticket sale and intimidated theatre owners into taking "Uncle Tom" off the stage.

Lawton's show was scheduled to open a lengthy road tour in Bridgeport, Conn. The Bridgeport Interracial council had prevailed upon Mayor Jasper McLevy to cancel the booking.

Strong protest caused by McLevy's banning the show forced him to rescind his action, but Lawton claims that the unfavorable publicity ruined his road tour.

2-9-46

Last September the Bridgeport CIO Council passed a resolution condemning the play for holding up the Negro to ridicule and asked rejection of the show "in order to maintain good interracial relations."

In his writ Lawton said that the racial charges were false and malicious and that the picketing had no relation to employee's working conditions and was done solely to destroy his business.

Lawton's suit is being filed in New York Supreme Court by Attorney Samuel Siegal.

three organizations he charged with having maliciously conspired to picket his production of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in Bridgeport, Conn., forcing it to close, was recently dismissed by Justice Charles B. McLaughlin in Supreme Court.

Mr. Lawton named as defendants Philip Murray, as president of the Congress of Industrial Organizations; William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist party, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

These groups, Mr. Lawton complained, picketed the play on the "false and fantastic" charge that the play held the Negro up to ridicule.

Sat. 4-20-46

The NAACP contended that picketing "was a legitimate expression of protest," and that Mr. Lawton had no cause of action.

Dismiss "Uncle Tom" Suit

Journal and Guide
Norfolk Va.
Sat. 4-20-46

NEW YORK CITY—(NNPA—A suit for $100,000, brought by Reed Lawton, night-club singer, against

New York Times 'Walk Hard' New York, N.Y.

Sun. 3-24-46

Voss

Leonard Yorr, Mickey Walker, Fiona O'Shiel and Maxwell Glanville in a new play Tuesday at the Chanin Auditorium.

At Long Last. "Walk Hard," Abram Hill's adaptation of Len Zinberg's novel, gets its Broadway production March 26 at the Chanin Auditorium, W. 42 st. Maxwell Glanville, looking very intelligent will have the lead role—that of the prize-fighter. Glanville is a product of the American Negro Theatre, where the play was first produced. The play will have a mixed cast with Mickey Walker (prize-ring star) in a prominent role. Gustav Blum is producing and John Wenger did the settings. "Walk Hard" will play Sunday matinees and night performances with Mondays off. The second matinee day is Saturday — (Graphic House foto).

Herald Tribune Sun. 3-24-46

WALK HARD—Tuesday evening at the Chanin Auditorium. A play by Abram Hill, based on Len Zinberg's novel, "Walk Hard, Talk Loud." Cast includes Mickey Walker, Maxwell Glanville, Joseph Kamm, Jacqueline Andre and Richard Kraft.

'WALK HARD' OPENS AT CHANIN TONIGHT

New York Times Wed. 3-27-46

Dramatization of Len Zinberg Novel Offers Mickey Walker in Debut as an Actor

New York, N.Y.

By SAM ZOLOTOW

A decade has slipped by since Gustav Blum was last represented here as producer-director of "Don't Look Now." Shouldering the same dual burden Mr. Blum is returning this evening with "Walk Hard," which will restore the 192-seat Chanin Auditorium to the legitimate fold. Naturally, Mr. Blum would have preferred a house with a larger seating capacity, but the demand for Broadway theatres these days far exceeds the supply. Should the critics welcome the new arrival, it's a cinch a Broadway house will become available.

Of more than passing interest in connection with tonight's première is the introduction of Mickey Walker, former welterweight and middleweight boxing champion, to the ranks of thespians. He will occupy an important role in Abram Hill's dramatization of the Len Zinberg novel, "Walk Hard-Talk Loud." To Maxwell Glanville has gone the pivotal assignment, that of a Negro pugilist who is determined to improve his lot.

Tested two years ago by Harlem's American Negro Theatre, "Walk Hard" marks the group's second offering ("Anna Lucasta" was the first one) to be reproduced in the Times Square area. For that privilege Mr. Blum is paying A. N. T. 2 per cent of the gross receipts.

Retained from the original cast are Leonard Yorr, Fred C. Carter, Joseph Kamm, Howard Augusta, Jacqueline Andre and Maurice Lisby in a company of eighteen, ten white and eight Negro performers. John Wenger devised the scenery and lighting. The schedule will include Sunday afternoon and evening performances. Curtain: 8:40.

—Kronenberger

A Negro Boxer Fights Life

PM Reviews

Fri. 3-29-46

WALK HARD, a play by Abram Hill, based on the novel by Len Zinberg, presented by Gustav Blum at the Chanin Auditorium, 122 E. 42d St., with Maxwell Glanville, Mickey Walker, Joseph Kamm, Dorothy Carter, Maurice Lisby, Leonard Yorr, Howard Augusta, Stephen Elliott and Jacqueline Andre; staged by Mr. Blum; settings by John Wenger.

A year or more ago the American Negro Theater produced *Walk Hard in Harlem*. Wednesday night Gustav Blum offered a second production in the Chanin Building's little 50th-floor eyrie of an auditorium. There it seemed to have as many faults as of old, and fewer virtues. Allowing for seeing it a second time—always a cruel test of a far from skilful play—I still think that this *Walk Hard* has lost the vitality that made it moderately good theater, if woefully bungled drama, in Harlem. In Harlem it sprawled; Wednesday night it dragged as well.

The play deals with the character and career of a young Negro boxer. Andy Whitman gets fighting mad at slurs against his race, and can only retort upon them with his fists. As a promising boxer, moreover, he comes up against a vicious and heartless promoter who almost wrecks his career. At the end Andy's future is salvaged; and he himself is made to realize—too facilely—that he must use his head instead of his mitts, and that the world's scoundels are more than just anti-Negro, are anti-human.

There are the makings of a strong play in *Walk Hard*, but they have been scamped. It comes up with one or two hard-hitting scenes, and it here and there catches the atmosphere and tough talk of the fight world. But most of the time the play wobbles through clumsily written and weakly contrived episodes, repeating itself or turning aside from the main story. The theme seems tacked on rather than worked in, so that *Walk Hard* really lacks substance as well as skill.

Maxwell Glanville's Andy is more engaging than expert; and Joseph Kamm's promoter too stagy to be really sinister. Mickey Walker, who in real life has abandoned boxing gloves for paint brushes, plays a prize-fighter in *Walk Hard* with enough naturalness to give matters a lift. But the production in general, not to speak of the play, needs a good deal more of one.

—Louis Kronenberger

66c 1946 ..Ballet

Geo. Padmore

London Correspondent

Defender

First Negro Ballet In London

LONDON saw its first Negro ballet recently when the young West Indian dancer, Berto Pasuka presented his Ballets Negres at the Twentieth Century Theatre in Westborune Grove. Judging from the acclaim with which the first performance was received, the group would seem assured of a successful season.

There was no doubt about the enthusiasm of the patrons, and many of them stood around the walls during the whole length of three ballets. The "little" theatre is tucked away in the outer purlieus of Bayswater, now rather run-down, but once the residential district for successful industrialists and merchants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their voluminous families. Saturday 6-8-46

Negro ballet is something entirely new to England, and the performance given on Tuesday, April 30, was the first ever to be presented in this country. Pasuka's conception of the ballet is essentially as an expression of human emotion in dance form, in complete contrast to the Russian ballet, with its stereotyped steps and stylization. Four ballets have been devised by Pasuka. "De Prophet," which opened the performance, had moments of tremendous excitement which worked to a crescendo both through music and the tempo of the dancers. It is based on what is purported to be a true incident said to have occurred in Jamaica of a religious fanatic who tries to impress village converts by flying to heaven. Failing, he is clapped into jail.

Invasion Of Africa

Chicago, Ill

OF PARTICULAR import to Africans and peoples of African descent generally, is the story told in the ballet, "They Came," which depicts how the Europeans came to Africa. First came the priest and missionary, then the trader, and last the soldier. The clash between Christianity and primitive religion, between modern science and witch doctor is pointedly portrayed, and there is some very fine dancing by Berto Pasuka.

"Market Day," also given on the opening night, portrays a typical market scene in the West Indies, with an orange seller being robbed of her purse and consoled by a vendor of trinkets with some gifts from his tray. "Aggrey," a fourth ballet, has also now had its first performance. It is based in the theory of the West African thinker, who compared the black and white keys of the piano, neither of which produces very much music without the other.

All the dances have been devised by Pasuka. With the exception of himself, the entire troupe of dancers are amateurs, and the stage on which they perform is extremely cramped. Yet he has done wonders both with his team and limited space. So well in fact, that critics of England's most sombre newspapers, like the Daily Telegraph, are able to write of the choreography and production in glowing terms. Speaking of the ballet "Aggrey," the Daily Telegraph critic says, referring to the stage, which presents a piano in which dancers dressed in black or white dance harmoniously until fear drives them apart.

"On that piano the choreographer and chief dancer, Berto Pasuka, plays with an energy unsurpassed by any maestro known to history. This art may be primitive, but it portrays primitive emotions—fear, anger, humility, pain—with irresistible force. 6-8-46 Sat.

Recognized As 'Art'

MRS. BERYL DE ZOETE, who is the author of a book on the dancers of Bali and generally recognized as something of an authority on ballet, says in a review: "There is no doubt that in his 'Ballets Negres' Berto Pasuka has discovered a new art form, which in dance may have the impact comparable to that of primitive African sculpture. Pasuka himself is a magnificent dancer and actor . . . Even more astonishing is the largely improvised performance of the unprofessional members of his Negro cast."

Word must be said about the orchestra, which provided the music from a piano, tom-tom and maraca, a form of African rattle similar to the calabash used in rhumba bands. So insidious was the music that the audience crowded around the orchestra in the intervals, watching them perform their miracles of sound. Chicago

Meantime, Ballets Negres has been recognized in this country as an art, as Pasuka has received a request from Mrs. Gabrielle Enthoven, O.B.E., of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is world renowned, asking that a copy of the first night program and those of future productions be sent to her for the Enthoven Collection at the Museum. This is highly gratifying to Berto Pasuka, who has put in so much effort, untiringly pursuing his object "to give London a real Negro ballet." While still attending classical ballet under Verishka in London, he worked hard on his own native art, working out his ideas for a Negro ballet. Now at last, through his patient and untiring labors, the Negro has taken his rightful place in the London theatre and in the history of ballet. His work may also have other effects, for as Pasuka said at the close of the first night performance: "I am no propagandist, but I hope that what the politicians have failed to do, Art will accomplish in bringing the black and white races closer together in understanding."

France Sees, Likes First All-Negro Ballet

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-19-46

By EDGAR A. WIGGINS

PARIS — (ANP) — The Ballets Negres, a unique creation interpreted by rhythmic dancing, originated by Berto Pasuka, 27-year-old Jamaican dancer, six months ago in London at the Theatre des Champs Elysees, and the superb performance was so tremendously applauded by the 2,500 "first nighters" (a large percentage in formal attire) who packed the huge modern theatre to capacity that 14 curtain calls were obligingly answered before the group could leave the stage.

It was a history-making event because never before had a Negro ballet been presented on the French stage, and whereas Negro art, African and American, still holds great favor among French theatre lovers and such American stars as Florence Mills, Nina Mae McKinney, Alberta Hunter, Adelaide Hall, Paul Robeson, Cab Calloway and others, who have appeared here in plays and films are still remembered and loved nearly as much as the incomparable Josephine Baker, the idea of anything so different and untraditional as a Negro ballet aroused incalculable interest and curiosity.

When this Negro ballet, with all of its potential force and reality, hit the French stage fans and critics began to understand why English critics in lauding the Ballets Negres had gone so far as to classify Berto Pasuka, for dancing with Marian Anderson and Paul Robeson for singing and drama.

66c 1946

Composers

"Stone Cold Dead" May Bring Composer $40,000

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md. Sat. 7-9-46

Tune Recorded by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Jordan Bidding for Hit Parade

NEW YORK. (ANP).—Sale of over half a million records of the Ella Fitzgerald - Louis Jordan "Stone Cold Dead in the Market" may mean $40,000 in royalties to Wilmoth Houdini, the composer.

Houdini, whose real name is Edgar Leon St. Clair, is a 45 year-old Brooklyn-born West Indian who spends half the year in Harlem and the other half in Trinidad.

He claims to have won every Calypso contest within the last 25 years and calls himself King of Calypso. His West Indian calypso rivals are known as The Lord Executor, The Lord Invader, of "Rum and Coca Cola" fame, The Senior Inventor, King Radio, Attila the Hun, The Growler, and The Caresser.

Calypso is a West Indian method of musical composition that requires the composer "to be high flown in his wordages." Houdini and his rivals are adept at dashing off musical comments on world affairs and local scandals in Latin and African rhythms in the favorite British West Indies accent.

Banned From Radio

His "Stone Cold Dead in the Market" is the story of a murder in Port-au-Prince's grass market in 1939. He first recorded the song himself that year under the title of "He Had It Coming," but it was unknown until Miss Fitzgerald unearthed it this year.

Both the NBC and ABC networks have banned the song because it accents justification of murder by saying the wife killed "nobody but my husband" with a frying pan. Other calypso tunes composed by Houdini include, "I Like Bananas Because They Have No Bones," "Roosevelt Opens World's Fair" and "Douglas MacArthur, a Brave Son of America."

But royalties on "Stone Cold Dead in the Market" are slated to be around $40,000, Houdini estimates, and the tune is expected to climb into the big ten on the Hit Parade.

King of Calypso

Time NewYork N.Y.

Fast rising in U.S. jukebox popularity this week is a inacabre little ditty about a woman's right to kill a man with a frying pan, since he was "nobody but my husband." Sung by Ella (*A Tisket, a Tasket*) Fitzgerald, *Stone Cold Dead in the Market* has sold over half a million records. It is climbing into the big ten on the Hit Parade even though it is banned on two networks—NBC and ABC—because murder is nothing to brag about.

Stone Cold Dead is the biggest Calypso hit since *Rum & Coca-Cola* (TIME, Jan. 29, 1945). It is also the first big success of 45-year-old Wilmoth Houdini, a Brooklyn-born Trinidad Negro who lives in Manhattan's Harlem half the year, the other half in Trinidad. Houdini, who has recorded 800 Calypso songs, expects to make $40,000 from it.

Wilmoth Houdini (real name: Edgar Leon St.-Clair) calls himself King of Calypso, a title sought after by rivals with such imposing titles as The Lord Executor, The Lord Invader (*Rum & Coca-Cola*), The Senior Inventor, King Radio, Attila the Hun, The Growler and The Caresser. All of them are old hands at dashing off musical comments on world affairs and local scandals, in Latin-African rhythms as insistent as radio commercials, and in the oddly distorted British accent of the British West Indies.

Mon. 8-26-46

Houdini claims to have won every Calypso "war" since 1920. The Calypso Carnival held on the two days before Ash Wednesday is now a major tourist attraction in Port-of-Spain, with each of the rival kings setting up headquarters in bamboo tents, and challenging each other to sing-downs composed on the spur of the moment.

Houdini's method is to rile his opponent by musical insults. He won his first war by being so insulting to two opponents at the same time that, after 45 minutes, they stopped to congratulate him on his virtuosity. His toughest battle was against the old Master, Lord Executor, until he found a fatal weakness to sing about: Executor's big toe had just popped out of his canvas sneaker.

Flight of Wordages. Houdini generally stays out of trouble by not criticizing Crown officials (one rival's song went: "*I must be very frank and say, I was glad when Sir Hollis went away*"). His *Stone Cold Dead* describes a murder in Port-of-Spain's Grass Market in 1939. He recorded it himself in 1939 (as *He Had It Coming*) but it got no popularity until Songstress Fitzgerald unearthed it this spring. Other Houdini songs have had such innocuous themes as *I Like Bananas Because They Have No Bones* and *Roosevelt Opens World's Fair*. The time King George ate hot dogs with the Roosevelts at Hyde Park moved him to this song:

King George did not use his knife and fork 8-26-46 Mon.
He said I will do nothing of the sort
So he held hot dog in his hand
*And face hot dog man to man.**

Warren Rothschild

WILMOTH HOUDINI
The Lord Executor's toe was showing.

Houdini's own favorite of all his compositions is *Douglas MacArthur, a Brave Son of America*. Like all the rest, its lyrics fit his first rule of composition. Says Houdini: "A Calypsonian is required to be high flown in his wordages."

He's stone cold dead in the market,
He's stone cold dead in the market,
*I kill nobody but my husband.**

Despite the song's apology for the crime, Houdini reports that the lady in question was actually sent up for life.

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Newsweek

MUSIC

Stone Cold Hot

Newsweek, New York, N. Y.

About a month ago, Tin Pan Alley got the word about a rhythm novelty which Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Jordan had just waxed up at Decca. After private hearings, everybody agreed the only exploitation needed was to wait until enough people heard the record once. They were right. By last week, more than half a million disks had been sold, with as many more almost certain to go. 7/29/46

As is often the case, "Stone Cold Dead in the Market," as the little wonder is titled, is not a new song. It had even been recorded by Decca itself as far back as 1939. Miss Fitzgerald heard it in a Calypso album and, perhaps remembering how a slightly jazzed-up West Indian beat had made a recent hit out of "All That Glitters Is Not Gold," knew it would be good for her style.

The song's composer and lyricist is a Calypsonian named Wilmoth Houdini who, although born in Brooklyn, was brought up in Trinidad (NEWSWEEK, Oct. 9, 1939). Houdini had patterned his opus, in the usual topical Calypso style, after a local West Indian scandal in which an outraged wife, on discovering her husband's pursuit of a shapely seller of seasonings and spices, had beaten him to death in the market with a frying pan. Hence:

He's stone cold dead in the market,

Newsweek

It's Houdini who dunnit at Decca

"Stone Cold" Composer

EDGAR L. ST. CLAIR,
45-year-old Brooklyn born West Indian, known to the composing world as Wilmouth Houdini, who expects more than $40,000 in royalties from his composition, "He Had It Coming," recently retitled "Stone Cold Dead in the Market," and popularized by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Jordan.

Sittin' Pretty, Too

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md.
LEE GAINES, bass singer with the Delta Rhythm Boys, who is gaining fame as a lyric writer. His latest song, "Just A-Sittin' and A-Rockin'," music done by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, is one of the nation's most popular number. Sat 6-29-46

NEW YORKER PENS TUNE ABOUT RETURNING VETS

8-24-46

NEW YORK—One of the best of the newer tunes is "Rainbow over Manhattan," with words and music by Lavonia Jobe Works, who had a husband, an uncle and four nephews in the Army. The song tells how returning vets feel when they see New York after a voyage overseas.

The Afro-American

The song has been recorded for the Acme Record Company by Ovie Alston.

Baltimore, Md.

MEET GORDON STRETTON

Composer of 200 Song Hits

The Tribune Washington, D.C. Sat. 11-30-46

The Prince of Wales and Charlie Chaplin are Among the Close friends of this man who took lessons in Paris at $100 per and taught Carmen Miranda when she was a stage struck "child".

By GEORGE W. MOUZON

Gordon Stretton, creative composer, arranger and musician is ten little men rolled into one.

A few inches over five feet, he weighs about 140 pounds. His clothes are very fashionable. He is naive, sentimental, sensitive, with much education and, impulsive.

The fact that he became a great composer and arranger shows how much more spirit, soul, and character there is in Gordon Stretton than appears on the surface.

He is the rare man who is not ashamed to cry at a tear-jerking movie. He is sensitive in more than the technical sense.

It was here in this theatre in Rio de Janeiro that Gordon Stretton gave Carmen Miranda her first lessons which later led her to stardom.

In origin, Stretton is strictly big city proletariat,, so typical in his upbringing, that he might be studied as a test tube of modern life. When very young he lost both of his parents and was placed in an orphan asylum, of

Marie Costello, vocalist and torch singer with the Stretton orchestra.

which his memories are not very pleasant.

You'd never guess that he'll be sixty his next birthday, unless he told you. He looks only thirty.

Irish and West Indian

Born in London, 1886, his father was Irish and his mother West Indian. At the age of nine, he joined the Troupe called the "Casey Colored Boys," stayed with them until he joined the British Army, where he saw four years of service.

After leaving the Army he migrated to Nice, Monte Carlo, Here he organized his first jazz band.

At this time he played drums and the banjo. His first band was composed of musicians who later rose to great heights in their own rights. Most noticeable is Harry Roy, present version of Paul Whiteman.

From Monte Carlo, as toast of the nobility, he was summoned to Brussell, Belgium to play for the King. He went to stay for one week and stayed or two years. While

acquired one of the largest racing stables in Belgium with twenty-six thoroughbreds carrying his colors.

But here Dan Cupid fired an arrow in his direction coming from a countess high in the esteem of his highness, the King, and quick departure was forced on Stretton.

Arriving in London from Belgium, he soon became the toast of London. This was due largely to the open friendship and admiration of the then Prince of Wales, who was at that time a Colonel in the Welsh Guards.

Worked With Chaplin

This friendship still exists today. There was never a party for nobility in which Gordon Stretton and his music was not present. He was the official orchestra for London's highbrow.

While in London, Gordan met and worked with the comedian, who later came to America to capture in heart, in laughter, Charlie Chaplin. To date they behold reunions whenever Chaplin is in any part of South America.

With a burning desire to reach the pinnacle of success, life in London soon bored Stretton and he moved to Paris to conquer the field of Opera his secret love.

In Paris he studied under Tony Balbis, who also taught Caruso, at the costly price of 1,000 francs (approxmately then) $100 per lesson.

While there he met the French musical comedy star, Maurice Chevalier, who, beside starring in "The Naughty Boy," also ran an ultra-exclusive club, "Les Acaecias."

He taught Chevaliar his first dance steps. Dooley Wilson of motion pictures, theatre, and night club fame was appearing in Paris at the same time and he and Stretton were constant companions.

Speaks 6 Languages

Here Stretton mastered six languages and won a scholarship to the conservatory of Belgium, which he accepted, only because his ex-friend, the King had long been dead. At the Conservatory he won first prize for two consecutive years for his works.

Being a realist, it was here he realized that Opera could and would not offer him much, if anything. Largely because of his size and color.

So he made up his mind to pack up his belongings and his wife, whom he married in London, and shuffle off to Argentina, and here he has been since.

Gordon Stretton, composer and musician, as he looks today.

In South America, every musical honor that could be bestowed upon him, has been. He has played his own music and sung for kings, presidents, dukes and duchesses, and the run of Who's Who in America. He has composed and written more than 200 song hits in Spanish, Irish and English.

One of his prized possessions is a drum skin autographed by the Prince of Wales, King Farouk of Egypt, King Albert of Belgium, King George, Emperor Haile Selassie, Admiral Halsey, President Vargas and many others.

Bridge Champ

For ten seasons he has been at South America's most fashionable resort hotel, Grand Hotel Nogaro at Mar Del Plata.

In the City of Buenos Aires, he has won eight cups in Bridge tournaments sponsored by the Comet Club, also, the City Bowling Championship. He has won several golf championships, most notable at the Mar Del Plata course, where he shot the only 62 ever played on the course.

Today Stretton can hit top C with mere ease. Thinks the hardest song to sing is from the Opera "Rusticana," meaning white flower. A gnawing desire for perfection makes him practice at the piano four hours

at Buenos Aires

le Be Bop" had to

because of so many

rom American of-

gathered at Charley's

ar, where he is cur-

tured on Buenos

at white way,

world is dead.

a bike 60 miles daily, plenty

A-of walking and plenty of fresh

not fruit.

He's surprised that more merican musicians have

given Argentina or South Amer- One of his most interesting ica a thought in the develop- stories is of the time he took a ment of music and claims that show to Rio De Janerio, "Little we are born with syncopation Esta." After the show, he vis- but with a little dash of color, ited the Presidential Palace with there are great possibilities. President Vargas, and later he

Reason for Stretton's youth- home of a family he had met

fulness, is because three months earlier.

of every year, he and his wife

vacation, at which time he rides

s that the average opera singers and

ger has a much hard- of every year, he and his wife

rently featured on

more than 2,000 be added, requests from

writing, he also ficers who gathered

plays saxophone, guitar, drums, at American Bar, where

trumpet and piano. He has in

repertoire more than 2,000

songs, the words to all he

knows. He can sing, and does

request, any American or

popular song from early 1900

Featured at

"Hey Bob

It's his plan to accom-

daily.

pany himself.

He has won

He thinks that

white flower. A gnawing desire for perfection makes him practice at the piano four hours to the present time.

popular singer has

er job than opera

that Opera in the

66c 1946

Tab Smith Pens New Hit Number

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 3-2-46

NEW YORK—Tab Smith, alias "Mr. Saxaphone," is currently thrilling the dancers nightly at the Savoy Ballroom with his newest hit song, "Purple Heart." Although the latest opus (penned by Smith himself, incidentally), was introduced only three weeks ago it already is requested more than any other piece in the huge repertoire of Smith favorites.

Tab Smith

Sat.

"Purple Heart" has the obvious topical appeal that comes from the relationship to the war and its citations to the heroes of the many theaters of action.

The latest Tab Smith hit tune will be recorded within the next two weeks. It is a velvety smooth tune in the same mold as "Mountain Air" and "I'll Buy That Dream" with the accent on minors and modulations. This type of music has always shown Smith's styling to best advantage and "Purple Heart" is no exception.

REN NEW SONG

3-2-46 Pittsburg Courier

HOLLYWOOD — Willie Smith, former Jimmy Lunceford star, and currently featured with Harry James, and Gerald Wilson, whose orchestra is the talk of the Coast, have combined their talents to write "Gee, We're Glad You're Back." Lou Baxter, returned serviceman is credited with the lyrics.

Why Don't Our Band Leaders Give Negro Songwriters Breaks?

Composers 3-16-46 Sat.

J. C. Johnson, Famed Composer, Asks Pointed Questions in Tin Pan Alley Setup

New York Amsterdam News

By J. C. JOHNSON
(Top Flight Composer)

When are some of the colored name band leaders going to give some serious thought to the plight of the established song writer? Why should this variety of strained courtesy continue to exist among them? There is no need whatever for this condition. N.Y. Ng.

So far, the active songwriter (and they are very few) has been extremely quiet on the matter of cooperation. Is it because a white leader will take a song quicker from a colored writer and record and play it into the hit class sooner than his own? I don't refer to the ever-ready aspiring songwriters in the bands (and there are many) who write the jam session, repetitious hokus-pocus germs. Recording being a natural by them being in the band, although the words are often banned from the air, a publication is somewhat unusual.

Considers Himself King

This type writer, on the strength of one recording, if you notice his chest expansion, considers himself terrific, deserving a Class AA rating. There is a remedy for such inflated ego, and his five minute knowledge of not knowing how to write a song. Without his band connection, see how many recordings and publications he gets and how many meals he'll miss in trying.

Here are a few songs not written just yesterday by colored writers. Are you ashamed of them?

Trav'lin All Alone . . . Honeysuckle Rose . . . Runnin' Wild . . . I'm Comin' Virginia . . . It's Wearin' Me Down . . . Old Fashioned Love . . . Lovie Joe . . . Ballin' the Jack . . . Love Will Find a Way . . . They Raided the House . . . The Devil Sat Down and Cried . . . St. Louis Blues . . . Moonlight Cocktail . . . Believe It Beloved . . . Sugar Blues . . . Ain't Misbehavin' . . . Cryin' My Heart Out for You . . . Munson Street Breakdown . . . Some of These Days . . . Lift Every Voice and Sing . . . I Ain't Got Nobody . . . Sweet Georgia Brown . . . When the Swallows Come Back To Capistrano . . . Hurry Up Sammy, Let's Go Home . . . Crazy Blues . . . Shine . . . Knock Me a Kiss . . . Walkin' By the River . . . Playmates . . . I Don't Want To See the World On Fire . . . Don't Let Your Love Go Wrong . . . Sophisticated Lady . . . When the Lights Go On Again . . . The Spider and the Fly . . . The Joint Is Jumpin' . . . One O'Clock Jump . . . In My Solitude . . . Stompin' at the Savoy . . . Rhythm and Romance . . . Please Go Way and Let Me Sleep . . . Yankee-Doodle Tan.

Only a Few of Hits

These songs do not even scratch the surface of songs written by colored writers and they are not being perpetuated by our leaders. Look at your color record releases. Notice how many times they have recorded the same songs of the same white writers. Leaders and artists seem to be limited in their selections when it comes to recording standards. And why are they called standards? Simply because the brother airs and records them continuously and keeps an arrangement of them in his books for all occasions. 3-16-46

The songwriter and leader seem to be going backwards getting nowhere. The songwriter wants to know when will the leader be willing to change the color scheme of this deplorable condition.

HIT TUNESMITHS: Left to right, Lucky Roberts, the late Fats Waller, J. C. Johnson, and Andy Razaf.

Gossip: Buddy Pens Song About Donegan

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Illinois Sept-27-46

CLEVELAND—Buddy Johnson, the fast-rising young "Walk 'Em Rhythm" creator, paid an unusual tribute to his big heartbeat, boogie-woogie pianist Dorothy Donnegan, in writing and recording the new song hit, "Fine Brown Frame," especially for her.

Maestro Johnson, who has been linked romantically with Miss Donnegan by the gossip columnists, and not without good reason, admitted she was the inspiration for his having written the song.

Slam Stewart Pens Opus for Serge Koussevitsky

AFRO-AMERICAN
Baltimore, Md.

BALTIMORE—Slam Stewart, generally accepted as the world's greatest jazz bass player, is now writing a special classical opus for presentation to hi idol, Serge Koussevitsky, violinist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Sat.

This, the elongated strummer told the AFRO last week while playing an engagement here at the Royal Theatre as a featured attraction with Lucky Millinder's orchestra and revue and doubling at a downtown club.

The idea, according to Stewart was prompted by the lavish compliments paid him by Koussevitsky after hearing him play a flute over a year ago in one of the Juilliard, Stewart has a thorough Town Hall jazz concerts. 5-18-46 background of formal training in theory and harmony of his instru-

Will Perform Classic

In addition, Stewart has the world famous virtuoso's promise that he will perform the opus with the New York orchestra when it is completed with the Slammer on the bass. ment.

A graduate of a Boston Conservatory and a former student at

COMPOSED MANY HITS—Shown here with his wife, Edna, is Maceo Pinkard, famous composer of pupular songs, at work on his all-colored operetta, "New World Fantasy", slated for a nation wide tour early this fall. Pinkard is the author of such hits as "Gimmie A Little Kiss, Will Ya Huh?" "Here Comes The Show Boat," "Sweet Georgia Brown," "Them There Eyes" and many others.

TROUBLE-SHOOTER. — Arranger-Composer Chappie Willet, tall, lanky Philadelphian, who heads the only

Andy Razaf, N.J. Council Candidate, Long Active in Making Music History

Author of 2,000 Songs, Candidate Is Grand Duke of Extinct Madagascar Line

By BOB QUEEN
(Photo on Picture Page)

ENGLEWOOD—Citizens of this Bergen County community will have the opportunity to go to the polls on Nov. 5 to vote for a non-partisan city council candidate who is one of its most distinguished citizens.

He is Andy Razaf of 332 Englewood Ave., author of over 2,000 songs dating from his first hit tune lyric, "Baltimore," written 33 years ago, through the ever-changing cycles of American musical tastes until the present time.

To the world he is known as the writer of the lyrics of the immortal "Honeysuckle Rose" and "Ain't Misbehavin," to which the late Thomas (Fats) Waller put the music.

Leadership His Keynote

To Englewood citizens he is a champion of the precepts of democracy.

Members of a committee who came to him in February to seek him as their candidate on an independent ticket, saw, through thousands of poems he has written for publication in newspapers and periodicals around the world, that here was their standard bearer.

The 50-year-old Razaf, sponsored by the Cosmopolitan Group, is running as city council candidate in the Fourth Ward against Joseph Conklin, Democrat, and Albert Moskin, GOP. The latter has held office for 12 years.

Born of Royal Parentage

Rated among the peers of American songwriters, Razaf is by no means a stranger to oppression, at home or abroad. He also knows through the royal blood in his veins of the French invasion of the island of Madagascar.

While the late John L. Waller, under President Harrison, was United States consul to Madagascar, located in the Indian Ocean off the southeast coast of Africa, his daughter met and married a member of the royal family of that country.

From that union, in 1895, Andreamenentania Paul Razafinkeriefo, was born a grand duke and nephew of the late Queen Ranavalona III of Madagascar.

The grand duke of that now extinct monarchy was the same songwriter, Razaf, whose father was slain in the French invasion of the island just prior to his birth. His mother, Mrs. Jennie Razaf Coles, now resides at 603 15th Ave., Belmar, N.J.

Song publishers were responsible for slicing the syllables from his elongated names. The surname in its original form means in the native tongue "noble child of wisdom."

Citizen in Every Respect

In Englewood, where Razaf made his home in 1940 because he saw "a community with a vision," he has appeared in concerts, lectured, been active in Memorial House, NAACP, Urban League, and along with his wife, organized a group known as "Friends of the Soldiers."

His talks in the schools and before leading Bergen County organizations have won him tremendous goodwill among all citizens.

When the Cosmopolitan Group's petition was placed before him last winter he yielded against his will and that of Mrs. Razaf. He told the AFRO it would mean his first encounter with politics, a phase of American life he disliked.

Placing civic duty above personal desire, he couldn't let them down, he stated, and formulated an 11-point platform under the managership of his neighbor, Lester Taylor, attorney and Englewood civic leader.

Bucks Wealth and Aristocracy

His platform covers proposed increased activities of minorities in community government, where the old-line North Jersey aristocracy and Wall Streeters are not uncommon.

He advocates the end of school discrimination, additional teachers and policemen, and representation in the all-white fire department.

Improvement in streets, housing facilities, local fair employment practices, municipal tax reduction and encouragement of industrial development also are on his program.

In Razaf's own words, "I seek to help the people who have not been blessed with the good fortune that has befallen others."

His campaign rally, scheduled for Oct. 31 at the Lincoln School here, will bring to Englewood many of the best known names of "Tin Pan Alley."

His long-time friend, Rep. Adam Clayton Powell of New York, will head the list of speakers.

Life a Volume of History

In his modest Englewood home, his songs, bound in leather, are contained in 10 thick volumes. The last binding is dedicated to his closest friend and co-author of many hits, Fats Waller.

Andy, who was born in Washington, shortly after his mother's return from Madagascar, stopped school at 16 and later married the former Jean Blackwell of Baltimore, who is first assistant at the Washington Heights branch of the Public Library of NYC.

Mrs. Razaf is also associated with Pearl Buck's East-West Society for the promotion of Oriental good will.

Her mother, Mrs. Sarah Blackwell, recently was retired after 40 years of service in the Baltimore public school system.

An Instrument of Note

A bona fide item related to the history of popular music, a piano, is in the corner of the Razaf living room.

Andy consistently turns out new tunes on it, and it is the instrument used by one of the great pianists, Fats Waller, for creating music for "Honeysuckle Rose." Razaf has turned down fabulous offers for the piano.

The dramatic birth of that tune occurred in the parlor of the Razaf home, which at the time was on Atkins Ave. in Asbury Park, where Fats used to visit to enjoy the rolls and other delicacies prepared by Andy's mother.

"Honeysuckle Rose," "Zonky" and "My Fate" were written in two hours with Fats picking out the music, Razaf pacing the floor behind him bringing forth the lyrics.

Also in the parlor at the time was Lucky Roberts of "Moonlight Cocktail" fame, who joined the duo in the penning of "My Fate."

An All Time Great

The former grand duke is regarded by Tin Pan Alley as one of the greats of all time. His songs are played no less than 40,000 times a year.

Metropolitan listeners of Martin Block's record program twice a day except Sunday, on WNEW hear his lyrics four times daily in the program theme song, "Make Believe Ballroom."

Ethel Waters rode to fame on his sensational hit, "My Handy Man."

In the years that followed, America's rhythmic pulse kept time with such Razaf numbers as "On Revival Day," "A Lover's Lullaby," "Keepin' Out of Mischief Now," Glenn Miller's "In the Mood," "Memories of You," "Stompin' at the Savoy," "Massachusetts" and "Christopher Columbus."

Music by Waller is featured on many of these tunes.

Night clubbers during the roaring twenties and the depressed thirties heard numbers by Razaf in "Connie's Hot Chocolates of 1928," Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds of 1930," the Grand Terrace shows of Chicago which pushed Earl Hines to the top, and approximately 40 other night club showers of songsheets of several Razaf-Waller tunes, including "My Fate is in Your Hands."

Razaf Once Crooned

A prize possession of his is a Columbia record nearly 15 years old on which he, billed as "Crooning Andy Razaf," sings on both sides in "All the World is Lonely" and "Empty Arms."

Both tunes were dedicated to the late "Blackbirds" star, Florence Mills.

Carved into the wood on the front of the Waller piano in Razaf's home are facsimiles of covers of several Razaf-Waller tunes, including "My Fate is in Your Hands."

Fate Weaves a Candidate

Was it fate, too, that led Razaf, when he was 17 years old, to write the following verses taken from his first poem, long before the aura of politics would envelop him?

"No party comes before my race.
I want the best my vote can buy;
Whichever party gives the most
On me that party can rely.

As long as jim crow rides the land
Speak not to me of "Lincoln's pen,"
Nay, brother, I'm no longer blind."

And neither do I wish to hear
Your vapor on forgotten men.
From now on, deeds—not eloquence—

Negro Music studio and licensed booking agency on the great White Way. His modernistically decorated suite at 156 West 44th St., has been the mecca of some of Broadway's topnotch stars in quest of unusual material or the best in arrangements.

COMPOSER PENS NEW SONGS

LOS ANGELES—Scheduled to go a long way along "Tin Pan" Alley Dennis D. Fernando, brilliant young composer, has just completed another song which is destined to become an overnight hit.

Titled "I'm Sad Again I'm Blue Again Tonight," the song is written in a waltz tempo and tells a story of a lost love.

The number has been accepted for publication by the Popular Songs Club, and already several orchestras have reportedly placed it on their recording agendas.

"I Like The Way You Flash That Smile At Me," is another promising song of Fernando's which is slated for recording, together with several others.

W. C. Handy Gives the Origin of Blue Tunes

He Call Kansas City Me

ST. LOUIS.—(ANP) — W. C. Handy, author of the famous St. Louis Blues, in an article in the March Negro Review entitled "Birth of the Blues," said that modern blues are the expression of the emotional life of a race, originated with the southern laborer long ago when the hiring of a man depended on whether or not he could sing. Phi 2-27-46

The singing of the working men set the rhythm for the work, the pounding of hammers or the swinging of scythes, continued Mr. Handy, became imprinted in the hearts of the workmen. The men sang of whatever was closest to their hearts, steamboats, fast trains, contrary mules, or cruel overseers. Each melody was fitted with personal words, becoming folk tunes, and traveling from place to place with roving workers, the songs were heard and learned by others. Thus the blues began in America.

NEW THEATRE IN ORANGE MOUND TO BE NAMED FOR FAMED WILLIAM C. HANDY

Memphis Herald

Memphis, Tennessee

Plans for a new $100,000.00 theatre has just been announced by Nate Evans, of the Savoy and Idlewild Theatres, spokesman for his associates in the new venture which include Mr. Evans' partners: Chalmers and Edward Cullins, Kemmons Wilson and Louis A. Walker of the Airway Theatre

The new theatre will be erected on Park Avenue, just a few feet east of Lenox Avenue and will be part of a project containing three or four stores in addition to the theatre. 2-8-46

The theatre will be named after Memphis' most outstanding citizen one who brought national fame to Memphis, W. C. Handy.

Mr. Chalmers Cullins, who approached Mr. Handy with the idea when he was last here for the Blues Bowl game, says, "that Handy was thrilled with the idea and promised to be on hand for the opening night ceremonies"

The theatre will seat between 1000 and 1200 and will have all the latest, modern equipment; seats, air conditioning and be conducted in a manner to be a credit to the community.

Mr. Evans is in hopes of getting a national chain to broadcast the opening ceremonies.

The erection of the W. C. Handy Theatre, bids fair to begin a new innovation for Memphis theatregoers, as many well remember the outstanding attractions brought to the Orpheum by Mr. Cullins and Mr. Evans, when they operated the Orpheum, now Malco. Many remember the names of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Jimmie Lunceford and many other stellar attractions that played the Orpheum, while under the Cullins and Evans banner. 2-8-46

Constructions will start shortly and the theatre should be completed early this year.

Handy Writes Afro-American New Symphony

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK (ANP) — W. C. Handy, known as the "Father of the blues," has just completed the piano scherzo for his symphony "Blue Destiny."

With the regular four movements, the fourth movement of "Blue Destiny" was to be built on "Limehouse Blues" and a melody from the fourth movement of Dvorak's "New World Symphony," which was scored by Chiaferelli for his concert at Acolian Hall.

"Since we cannot publish this fourth movement and Chiaffarelli is dead, I am building the fourth movement with "Memphis Blues," Handy said. 2-2-46

He is still building on his symphonic work in the "Harlem Blues," which is now published for military bands as "Ode to Harlem." Gershwin through "Harlem Blues" was his best work, he said.

He released a work in retrospect in Jazz in December, which is a concert orchestration of "Sounding Brass and Tinkling Cymbals."

Handy Writes Symphony

NEW YORK — (ANP) — W. C. Handy, known as the "father of the blues," has just completed the piano scherzo for his symphony "Blue Destiny." Sat 1-26-46

'Father Of The Blues' Tells Life Story At Texas College

Chicago Defender

Chicago, Ill.

TYLER, Texas—W. C. Handy, "Father of the Blues," told his amazing life story to a mixed audience of music lovers at Texas College Thursday night, then topped off his appearance here by playing his trumpet at a reception and banquet honoring him at the home of President and Mrs. D. R. Glass.

From all sections of Texas, Negro and white admirers came to hear the great composer of America's most famous song, "St. Louis Woman."

Step by step, in choice and gripping language, punctuated at times by a native humor and at others by a touch of pathos, Handy unfolded the story of his eventful life. Sat 3-30-46

Meets Old Friend

One of the biggest surprises of Handy's appearance here was the narrative he told concerning his association with an elderly and highly respected Tyler citizen, Rev. T. J. Austin. Reverend Austin, for many years principal of the Emmett J. Scott High School here, was one of Handy's teachers when he was a lad in his teens.

According to the eminent composer, Reverend Austin, then a teacher at Florence, Ala., where Handy was born and attended school, heard Handy use a choice sample of "unadulterated cursing" and was admonished by Professor Austin: "I'll tell your daddy on you," and that was the one thing Handy didn't want, for his father, the Rev. C. B. Handy, had a well merited reputation for "laying it on hard and heavy" when there were reports brought him by other parents as to bad deportment on the part of his own children.

At the end of the program, Handy had the pleasure of meeting and chatting with his old teacher, now retired after a teaching career spanning more than 50 years in instructing youth in public schools, elementary and high, and professor in college.

To Tour Texas

Occupying places on the platform with the guest were Dean Oliver W. Crump of Texas College; Prof. M. B. Tolson of Wiley College, Marshall, Texas; and Dr. F. E. Williams, prominent Tyler physician.

The Texas College appearance of Handy was arranged by the Artists Series Committee through the Log Cabin Theatre.

10,000 Hear W. C. Handy At Music Festival In Greensboro

Journal and Guide

Norfolk, Va.

GREENSBORO, N. C. — 10,000 persons crowded in Memorial Stadium here Sunday, heard and cheered W. C. Handy, "Father of the Blues," and roared its best wishes to the GI and his bride following their wedding ceremony during the fourth annual Song Festival and Quartet Contest which brought together a number of other features and included many quartets and choirs.

The aged musician and composer, Mr. Handy proved himself to be one of the most appreciated features of the full afternoon program as he sang and played on his trumpet his immortal compositions "Memphis Blues" and "St. Louis Blues". Sat. 5-25-46

Salem, N. C. He served in the army eighteen months in the Pacific theater and held the rank of sergeant.

Sgt. and Mrs. Allen Graves were best man and matron of honor, respectively. The bridal party included ten bridesmaids and ten ushers.

DIXIELAND WINS

Winners in the quartet contest were the Dixieland Jubilee Singers of Greensboro in first place and the Southern Jubilee Singers of Durham, second.

Reversing the order of choir winners last year the Brooks Memorial Choir of High Point took first honors pushing into second place the Awakening Harps of Zion from Rockingham, N. C.

Pre-festibal music was furnished by the classy Jordan Sellars High School Band from Burlington, directed by R. L. Michael. Following the scripture by Rev. Sawyer and the prayer by Rev. Tynes the Lord's Prayer was sung by Miss Esther Troxler.

PERSONALITIES

Among the personalities presented for brief messages of goodwill were: Attorney Harbert Parks, W. H. Blacker of Howard University; James A. Jackson of the Standard Oil Company; Bishop Jehu Crowdy, Church of God and Saints of Christ, Philadelphia; Rev. H. L. Dawkins, Wilmington, Del.; Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown of Memorial Institute; and Mary Price, secretary of the Committee for North Carolina, an affiliate of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

Special artists were John D. Wiftey, baritone and George W. Matthews, tenor.

The entire program was chairman of the music committee. The program was directed by Leroy R. Russell, master of ceremonies.

The Flying Clouds of Detroit, Mich., were special guests not competing for prizes.

The bride and groom were the recipients of many gifts from firms and individuals.

WEDDING FEATURE

Amidst the color and drama of the huge festival audience the former Miss Dorethea Gibson of Fayetteville, N. C., became the bride of John Buryan Andrews of Wagram, N. C. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. J. W. Tynes, pastor of Providence Baptist Church, here, who was assisted by the Rev. M. P. Sawyer, pastor of the Trinity AME Zion Church.

Mrs. Andrews is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Gibson and was given in marriage by her father. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Andrews and is a student of barbering in Winston-

66c 1946 Dancers (Katherine Dunham)

Katherine Dunham Opens Interracial Dance School

The Afro-American 1-19-46
Baltimore Maryland.

NEW YORK.—Katherine Dunham, world-famous dancer, has opened her new School of Dance at 220 W. 43rd St., in the heart of Broadway, assisted by a staff of talented teachers, presenting a full curriculum in dance for both adults and children.

Students are instructed in the Dunham technique, percussion—use of primitive instruments, native folk dances, ballet, tap dancing, eukinetics, body training for actors, elementary and professional acting and playwriting.

Miss Dunham's school, of course, is completely interracial both in its staff and its student body. The main emphasis in the curriculum is professional training for the concert hall and the theatre. 1-19-46

The staff includes Todd Bolender, formerly of Ballet Russe; Syvilla Fort, supervisor of the school, a graduate of the Cornish School of Art, Music and Drama; Marle Bryant, now appearing in "Are You With It?", latest Broadway musical hit, and formerly with Duke Ellington; Eleanor Guy, who did concert work with Hans Wiener of Boston; Lucille Ellis, Henri Augustin and Lenwood Morris, all prominent members of Miss Dunham's permanent company, and Phillip Freund, of City College and Hunter College.

"Windy City" Closes After 3-Day Stand

Baltimore Md.
Afro American

PHILADELPHIA

"Windy City," the musical play with dancing directed by Katherine Dunham, closed Saturday night, after remaining one of three scheduled weeks at the Shubert Theatre. Sat 5-4-46

It is now in its first week in Boston, marking its second showing in New England. Before the Shubert engagement, it played several tune-up performances in New Haven.

Miss Dunham Gets a 'Pop' Date

5-17-45
New York Times

Katherine Dunham and her eighteen dancers will appear May 6 in the first of a series of "dance nights" in the seven-week season of Carnegie "Pop" Concerts, according to an announcement yesterday. She will present "Choro," with music by Gogliano; "Rites de Passage" and "Rara Tonga," the last two composed by Pasquita Anderson from primitive themes.

Dunham Directs White Dancers

Afro American
Baltimore Md.

NEW YORK—Katherine Dunham, celebrated dance artist, is directing the choregraphy of "Windy City," a production by Richard Kollmar, which will arrive here in May.

The play, with music by Philip Yordan, co-author of "Anna Lucasta," will open in New Haven and play Philadelphia before its New York debut. Sat 4-11-46

This is the first occasion of Miss Dunham directing the dances of a regular Broadway musical comedy and also of her directing a troupe of all-white dancers.

Madeline Berard Here to Study Teacher's Technique

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Says Swiss Audiences Prefer Mixed Dance Teams; First Partner Colored

Sat. 9-14-46

NEW YORK—Race prejudice is just something that never entered the mind of Madeline Berard, white Swiss dancer, who is currently studying tap dancing at the Katherine Dunham Dance School, with an eye toward developing some of the famous Dunham's "technique."

"People in Switzerland and in other countries in Europe like mixed dancing couples. They say colored are the best dancers," she told the AFRO in an exclusive interview.

Referred to by GI's as the Swiss Eleanor Powell, she danced in France and Switzerland with the celebrated tap dancer and musician, Jacques (Jackie Bamboo) Bourgarel, a native of Guadaloupe, in theatres and clubs during the war.

Taught Her Many Things

"With him, I learned a lot of things: tap dances and the right kind of rhythm I couldn't learn otherwise. Jacques, a French professor before the war, was well known as a blues singer."

Her family in Switzerland protested when in 1939, still in her teens, she set out to be a dancer, but they didn't mind at all when she brought home a colored dance partner for the holidays, Jacques.

"Please invite colored soldiers into your homes for Christmas," read notices in her Swiss town of Vevey, and the residents in town gladly invited them.

Danced for Swiss Soldiers

"I began dancing for the Swiss soldiers in 1939 when the war broke out," she continued. "I was in a theatrical revue at the time. I met Jacques in 1942 while he was a dancer in Phillipe Brun's band. I saw him dance, too, so I asked him if he would dance with me. He was interested right away, so we began engagemants in Geneva."

After dancing for six months in Switzerland, they went to Nice, France, in October; but after 10 days the Germans moved in and occupied it. The Germans made her stay in Nice for six months before they granted her a visa.

"It was very bad there," she pointed out, "life in itself, and nothing to eat. The Germans took everything. I refused to dance for the Germans. They couldn't force me because I was a Swiss and a neutral."

Jacques Forced to Remain

Jacques was obliged to stay in France when she returned home; and it was only this year, in January, that he went back to Switzerland. They began teaming up again and fulfilled five contracts before she left him and came to America in May. He is dancing alone in Copenhagen now.

Asked how she learned of the Dunham School, she replied: "I saw the picture, "Stormy Weather," in which Dunham dances. It was a rage overseas. Also, I heard about her from colored GI's and read about the school in the news papers.

"It was a chance for me to come to America and study with Katherine Dunham, and I didn't want to give it up. Jacques would like to come here, too, but unfortunately has no relatives in America. I have my uncle and aunt here," She said Miss Dunham is corresponding with Jacques and may bring him here.

MADELINE BERARD

No Prejudices at Home

"Except for the school, I don't know what I would do here, because the feeling about races is so different in Switzerland . . . no prejudices."

She feels at home here. Colored predominate among the students, yet there are white students from the deep South, and the color question doesn't exist here.

"I love the school. I like to come here every day. It is like home to me. After all, things are different in Europe, and it keeps me from being lonesome. Now, I am working especially hard because I expect to return to Switzerland soon.

Prefers Colored Partner

"If I can find a partner here, male or female, colored or white, I would like to go back to Europe as a dance team. I would prefer returning as a mixed team like before."

Miss Berard is 24, tall and beautiful. Her English is not perfect, and I had to draw on my knowledge of French many times. The Swiss "Eleanor Powell" has been described as having beautiful lambs and being a very fine dancer.

It's a pleasure to have such an unprejudiced person in America; and if she returns to Switzerland with a colored dance partner, she will do much to overcome the race barriers planted there by reactionary American army officers.

—RICHARD R. DIER

Swiss Dancer "at Home" at Dunham Dance School

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — (ANP) — The newest student at the Dunham Dance School here, Miss Madeleine Berard of Switzerland, last week told how lonely she would have been in this "race conscious" country if she had not found this interracial school. Sat. 8-31-46

"The feeling about races in Switzerland is so different than here," she declared. The school with Katherine Dunham as director, has students of all races working together in harmony.

THE DANCE: DUNHAM

The Times Sun. 11-17-46

Schoolmarm Turned Siren or Vice Versa In 'Bal Negre' at the Belasco

New York, N.Y.

By JOHN MARTIN

THERE are two schools of thought about Katherine Dunham. One group recognizes in her a woman of fine intellect, a sincere student of anthropology and its broader and more practical implications. The other group sees her as a beautiful, highly sexed, theatrical entertainer, with surprisingly few inhibitions in the material she puts on the stage. Both groups are unquestionably right, for Miss Dunham is Siamese twins, in a sense, however little she may look it.

The Katherine Dunham School of Arts and Research is a phenomenal institution. It comprises the Dunham School of Dance and Theatre, the Department of Cultural Studies and the Institute for Caribbean Research. It has two, three and five year courses leading to professional, teaching and research certificates; its faculty numbers thirty, its curriculum contains everything from dance notation through ballet, modern, and primitive techniques to psychology and philosophy, with acting, music, visual design, history and languages by the way; its student body, unaffectedly interracial, numbers approximately four hundred; and—its deficits are enormous.

At this point the other Dunham steps in, whips together a tropical revue, wows them on Broadway and elsewhere, and sinks the profits in the school. It is a procedure that probably does not make sense, but no stubbornly idealistic project ever quite does.

To imply, however, that this giving of money-making shows works a hardship on the total Dunham would be to deny the evidence. There is about her an obvious delight in being a successful theatre figure—a choreographer, a director, a performer, and, by no means least, a glamour girl. Very few serious and competent pedagogues could hope to make the grade, and pride would seem here, if ever, to be altogether pardonable.

Another View

But there is also, as it happens, a third school of thought about this whole matter. It is, perhaps, a small group, but it clings to the belief that the Dunham schizophrenia is more apparent than real, and will some day be conquered. In "Bal Negre," her newest production now ensconced in the Belasco Theatre for four weeks, this group finds great comfort, for here there seem to be indications of a developing rapprochement between the two hitherto apparently irreconcilable Dunhams. As in the simple performances of her early dance recital days, the breath of art is beginning to blow at least lightly down the neck of a retreating "show business." And in the healthy field of art both Dunhams should find themselves happy, unified and fulfilled. If this be wishful thinking, make the most of it.

Some of the Evidence

In evidence one offers several specific items, as well as things more intangible. The novel overture, designed to be seen as well as heard, is one of them. It may well be too long, as the whole show is inclined to be, but it has imagination and a substantial charm.

The "Shango" scene, revived from "Carib Song," manages to make a legitimately theatrical spectacle out of a primitive religious ritual. The final section seems to introduce extraneous matter simply to make for an effective curtain, but that is a secondary consideration.

"L'Ag'ya," the atmospheric folk drama of old Martinique which was first produced for the Federal Theatre, also has its faults. Its first scene is conventional and flat, but its scene in the jungle of the zombies is altogether admirable (though what has become of the old rocking chair that used to lend such a sense of reality to its mumbo-jumbo?), and the final scene of the beguine, the wrestling match and Miss Dunham's hypnotic dance is rich and full.

Most engaging of all is "Haitian Roadside," which is just a cumulative arrangement of folk items, not actually related to each other, but forming together a vivid and convincing picture of an exotic

way of life.

Among the shorter numbers, a "Rhumba" trio has, perhaps, the best choreography of the entire show, and the "Son" and the "Nanigo" are well done. The "Choro" is spoiled by the introduction of brisés volés and the like, and "La Comparsa" does not come off. Also, the ragtime section is superficial and negligible. Miss Dunham has not studied these dances as an anthropologist or even as a historian. In general, some of the boys should be reminded that they are not Russian ballerinas and that it would be nice if they would comport themselves accordingly.

But over the show as a whole, including the many parts of it that are not new, is a new dignity, an absence of sensationalism, a new taste, that certainly interfere not at all with its values as theatre entertainment.

Vandamm

DANCER DUNHAM
Slithers and stories.

Chicago, Ill.
Time
11-18-46

New Revue in Manhattan

Bal Negre (produced by Nelson L. Gross & Daniel Melnick) is the third of handsome Negro Choreographer Katherine Dunham's "revues" and, like her *Tropical Revue* and *Carib Song*, is really an evening of dancing. Miss Dunham has a well-nigh unapproached knowledge of the exotic dances of the West Indies and the Caribbean, which she has recreated in forms of her own. *Bal Nègre* offers a variety of them that, from a theater standpoint, seems badly lacking in variety. On its own terms, however, *Bal Nègre* often has a good deal of color and excitement, and in their own way Miss Dunham and her company dance, slither and writhe expertly.

Initiates may find the real meat of *Bal Nègre* in its elaborate ritual dances and act-long, story-crammed ballets. More casual observers may find these somewhat arty, and cotton much more to *Bal Nègre's* gay, stylish folk dances—and to its spoof of the ragtime and jazz cavortings of not-so-tropical climes.

Katherine Dunham Made $891,000 Last Year: Must Go to Work—She's 'Broke'?

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 8-24-46

NEW YORK—Katherine Dunham, exponent of the Caribbean dance, makes her art pay off, but it is expensive to promote.

Although La Dunham grossed more than three-quarters of a million dollars in nine months last year ($891,000 to be exact), and netted $75,000 for herself, she sank $6,000 a month in her dancing school, and now must hit the road again—because she's "broke"—to bring in more cash to keep the school open.

School Fully Equipped

Located on the top floor of the Lyric Theatre in West 43rd Street, the school has everything conducive for the promotion of her art and for the training of hand picked young talent sent her from as far away as Haiti.

Miss Dunham has faith in her school. "The whole thing carries a basic cost of over $6,000 a month," she told an interviewer, "but it will eventually pay for itself."

KATHERINE DUNHAM
Needs a Little Help

However, she would like to find some one to subsidize it for a while as the strain is so great at this time. "No matter how much I make personally I keep pouring it all right back," she added.

At present, Miss Dunham is rehearsing "Bal Negre," a concert unit which goes on tour in Sept. before opening in the Broadway showcase. She was last seen on the White Way in another one of her own productions, "Carib Song," which had a brief run.

Hopes to Make $1,500,000

She has set her goal at $1,500,000 for the coming season, which she says will give her "a fairly fantastic personal income. But the take will not be big enough."

Miss Dunham, who says she is now broke, expects to be broke again by Spring, even if she grosses her anticipated $1,500,000, because she's going to sink that in her school, also.

Katherine Dunham Balks Plugs

The Defender Chicago, Ill.

Hits Producers For Billing Show As Sexy

Sat. 10-12-46

BRIDGEPORT, Conn.—In an interview here while playing a pre-Broadway tryout of her new revue, "Bal Negre," Katherine Dunham unleashed a bitter attack on the producers of the revue, Nelson Gross and Daniel Melnick of New York.

She said, "They are advertising the show as a torrid, sexy attraction. I hate this kind of advertising. My show is a serious and artistic study of native Negro dances. The only thing torrid and sexy about the revue is the dirty minds of those customers who come to seek sex."

Miss Dunham said that she had several arguments with Gross and Melnick and that they had promised to elevate the style of the advertising copy for the show to a much higher level. "If they don't," Miss Dunham said, "I will have to do something drastic."

Other cast members said that if Gross and Melnick don't radically revise their advertising policy Miss Dunham may walk out on them.

Miss Dunham further stated, "There are enough serious students and lovers of the dance to make the production a financial success. The prurient thrill seekers who come only to be titillated will not insure the financial or artistic success which 'Bal Negre' deserves."

66c 1946

Dancers (Pearl Primus)

Pearl Primus Dance Recital Sunday Night

Pearl Primus will present a program of established dance favorites and new works at Hunter College Assembly Hall Sunday night, Jan. 20 at 8:30 p.m. Miss Primus has invited two colleagues of the Showboat cast, dancer Claude Marchant and baritone John Garth III, to be guest artists. 1-17-46

Five new works will receive their premiere performances that evening, **Dance of Beauty, Dance of Strength, Just Born, Scorpio** and **Twinsome Twominds** (the latter three are excerpts from the **Zodiac Suite** for which Mary Lou Williams did the original music). Miss Primus has also programmed a variety of past successes, **Afro Haitian Playdances, Shouters of Sobo, The Negro Speaks of Rivers, Strange Fruit, Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child** and **Hard Times Blues.** 1-17-46

Mr. Marchant will present his **Afro Cubano** Suite in addition to **La Catchemba, The Brazilian Play Dance, Nanyango** and **El Campesino.** Mr. Garth will do the narrations and background songs for Miss Primus and will present some solo selections.

PEARL PRIMUS

The Daily Worker Dance New York, N.Y.

It was an exciting evening Sunday night at Central Needle Trades School when Pearl Primus & Co. performed. The first half of the program consisted of primitive numbers in which Pearl excels. There were three stars from Show Boat who are worthy of mention. They are Vicki Henderson, Alma Sutton and Joe Nash. Especially in 'Dance of Strength' and 'Yanvaloo,' Pearl was enthusiastically received by the audience. She executed them excellently. In 'Shouters of Sobo' in which the costume was most interesting, Pearl proved that her dance quality in primitive work has reached great heights.

Wed. 1-16-46

The second half of the program was given to modern work. In her jazz number, 'Rock Daniel,' there again you could recognize Pearl's quality. The ease with which she performs and her exciting leaps into the air are an awe-inspiring spectacle to the audience. There was one modern number that should be mentioned, particularly as it is one of her real attempts at creating something more important. 'Chamber of Tears,' in which she also created the words (Gordon Heath of Deep Are the Roots narrated), proved that Pearl has great imagination and depth but that her modern technique is too limited to bring out the scope of her expression. What she lacks most is a greater development of technique which should be equal to her depth and imagination. With a broader vocabulary of movement, the dance forms would give a clearer picture to the spectator who feels that she has a lot to say but that she is carried away by her own emotion and not projected across sufficiently.

LILLIAN KATZEN.

Primus Witch Doctor in "Emperor Jones"

NEW YORK.—Pearl Primus, dancer in "Show Boat," will appear next week in Chicago Opera Company's production of "Emperor Jones" as the witch doctor.

PEARL SAVES ANOTHER SHOW

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-26-46

Pearl Primus was rushed to Chicago to add push to the box office when the Chicago Opera Co. box office showed signs of weakening. As a result the company presentation of "The Emperor Jones," starring Pearl and Lawrence Tibbett, set an all-time record.

Even Broadway Admits Pearl Primus Is 'Miss Dance,' Critic Finds

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-26-46

When Barney Josephson signed Pearl Primus for his Cafe Society Downtown he was experimenting and against the wishes of his producers and advisors. Barney gave the girl a job; his critics gave her one week. They just knew Broadway wouldn't go for her "jungle rhythm" dancing.

When Pearl left the cafe several months later she did so only because bigger things beckoned—and at an unbelievable jump in salary. Today as the star of "Showboat" at the Ziegfeld Theatre she is Broadway's highest paid dancer.

Barney came across Miss Primus by sheer accident. He had gone on a visit to the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem for the sole purpose of listening to a singer he had heard was ripe for Broadway. But the singer didn't get a tumble from Barney because everyone's eyes were glued on "Pearl" one of the numerous jitterbug dancers on the floor and Josephson was most interested.

Raves by critics and patrons of Cafe Society attracted all manner of producers and booking agents to watch this new dance sensation. As always is such cases this led to bigger things. Pearl was given an orchestra, a dance group and placed at the Belasco Theatre where only the spoken drama had played up to this time.

Here, as at Cafe Society the dancer was a sensation. The theatre was available for only two weeks otherwise Pearl Primus' show might have remained for months. Nightly jams at the box office gave ample proof of this contention.

Dancing, which she has mastered in the most artistic sense, was not among Pearl Primus' earlier ambitions. Her schooling directed toward a degree in medicine. She was majoring in psychology when she turned to the stage.

Pearl has a distinct place in show business. She has been labeled "life saver" as a result of her moving in at the last minute to save a number of shows. An example of this unique role was demonstrated in Chicago the past fortnight when Pearl made two plane trips here to appear in the "Emperor Jones." The Chicago Opera Company had been having box office troubles, particularly the first part of the week. So the management sent for Pearl, co-starred her with Lawrence Tibbett in "The Emperor" and a repeat performance was necessary. She has driven Chicago dance crazy.

Pearl Primus is a "dancing natural" as they say in theatre and cafe circles. The girl has everything. She can jump over the Brooklyn Bridge and come out dancing; she can kick higher than any human and does 'em all with the grace of a Fred Astaire or a

Bill Robinson.

66c 1946

Dancers (Bill "Bojangles" Robinson)

Bojangles Robinson Refuses to Dance

Kansas City, Missouri

BALTIMORE, Md. — (ANP) — Bill (Bojangles Robinson) refused to dance on a makeshift stage here last week. And the result was that an estimated 5,000 colored and white patrons were refunded admissions.

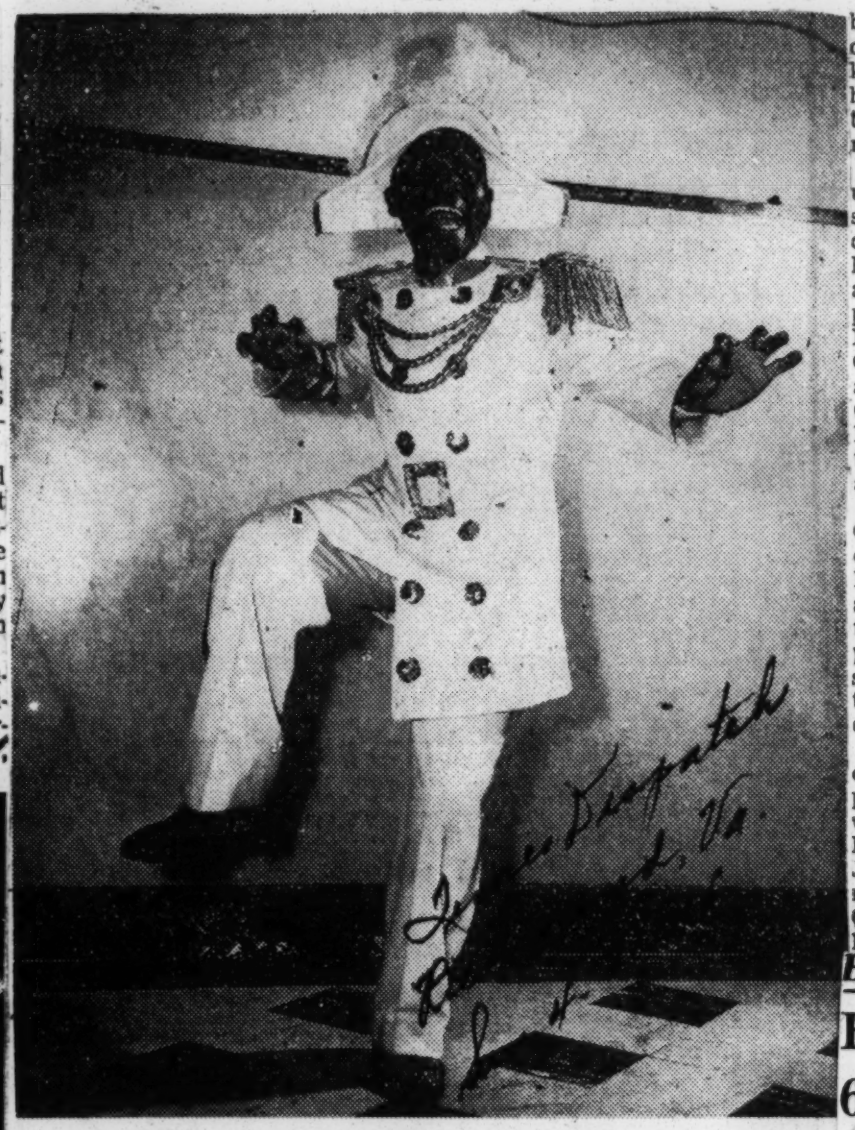
The affair, promoted at the Baltimore gardens by J. A. Halperin, is said to have been the first theatrical event in this city in which Negro and white patrons were seated without discrimination.

1-25-46

Halperin and Bojangles called off the show by common consent because the improvised stage ftcilities were too small for the dancer. The Baltimore garden was selected because it is the only place here where any patron can be seated on the main floor.

Concerts for Negroes are generally held at local Negro churches, while those for whites are ordinarily held at the Lyric theater, which bars Negroes.

Bojangles puts some jingle-jangle into the $12,000,000 cancer fund campaign with a tap dance in Times Square which netted more than $500. Those are nickels, dimes, and quarters you see around his feet. *Photo by Irving Haberman*



Richmond-born Bill Robinson, who will be feted in New York tomorrow to celebrate his 60 years in show business. He is seen above as he appears currently at Cafe Zanzibar.

Stage and Screen Artists To Honor Bill Robinson

Richmond, Va.

By Edith Lindeman

TODAY is probably the greatest single day in the life of 67-year-old Bill Robinson. Tomorrow may be more exhiliarating, for tomorrow night at the Cafe Zanzibar New York's civic leaders, as well as dozens of stars of stage and screen will turn out to celebrate "Bill Robinson Day," marking the dancer's 60 years in show business. But, since anticipation is always the greater part of pleasure, today is the last 24-hour period in which Bill may sit back and contemplate the remarkable achievements which took an untutored little Negro boy of 7 from the markets of Richmond to a top position in the entertainment field.

BILL ROBINSON MARKS ANNIVERSARY DANCING

New York Times Wed. 5-1-46

Bill (Bojangles) Robinson celebrated his sixtieth year in show business last night by "just dancing," as he had predicted he would. Before a host of admirers and many persons prominent in the theatrical profession, the venerable old dancer "went to town" in a special performance at the Cafe Zanzibar, Broadway at Forty-ninth Street.

The festivities completed a day during which he was honored at various public and private functions throughout the city. Letters and telegrams of congratulation arrived at his residence, the Rockefeller Apartments in Harlem, and at the club. A gold life-time membership card to the American Guild of Variety Artists, the first of its kind to be presented, was given to him by Matt Shelvey, the organization's national administrative director.

The proceedings, which got under way at 11 P. M., lasted for several hours. A feature was a cavalcade of vaudeville tracing the life and career of the dancer, with a group of old-time variety artists participating. They included Maude Nugent, who introduced "Rosie O'Grady"; Billy Gould of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" fame; W. C. Handy, Harland Dixon, Joe Laurie Jr., Mae Murray, John Barton, Jeannette Dupree, Noble Sissle and Cab Calloway.

Gene Buck, in behalf of Mayor O'Dwyer, who earlier had proclaimed the day as "Bill Robinson Day," gave to the Negro performer a plaque praising his contribution to show business. Mr. Robinson expressed his appreciation in a brief speech, which was broadcast, coast-to-coast, over the National Broadcasting System.

Wed 5-1-46

Among the impressive gathering of well known figures on hand to pay their respects to the dancer were Harry Hershfield, Bert Lytell, Brock Pemberton, Lee Shubert, Joe Howard, former Police Commissioner Edward P. Mulrooney, Gilda Gray, Rae Samuels, Lena Horne and Tom Smith.

Broadway Report:

N. Y. Newyork, N.Y. 5-4

Bojangles Marks 60th Tapping Year

Sun 4-28-46

Bill Robinson will celebrate his sixtieth year in show business on Monday with a blaze of activity. Mayor O'Dwyer has proclaimed Monday as Bill Robinson Day and the dancer will be taking bows at private and public functions all over the city. At night there will be a party in his honor at the Cafe Zanzibar starting at 11 p.m. when a batch of old time show people will show up to do him honor including Mae Murray, Irving Berlin, Harry Hershfield, John Barton, Gilda Gray, Rae Samuels, Joe Howard, and Joe Laurie, Jr.

* * *

The Equity Library Theater's production of Shakespeare's *Othello* will be given at the Hudson Park Library, 10 Seventh Ave., S., on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 8:40 and Thursday at 2:40.

Sun 4-28-46

Act, Inc., which is running a 12-week season of Summer stock at the Studio Playhouse in Upper Montclair, N. J., starting June 17, is looking for a juvenile, a couple of ingenues and a character woman to fill out the company. Call WA 9-2405 between 6 and 9 p.m. until Monday, the group's deadline.

* * *

Maurice Schwartz will open the 27th season of the Yiddish Art Theater next Fall with a dramatization of Zalman Schneour's novel *Song of the Dnieper*.

Bojangles Makes It Rain Money in Times Square

Sat 4-11-46 Afro American

BILL ROBINSON

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Last week was a busy one for ageless Bill (Bojangles) Robinson who never feels like not dancing.

In addition to his regular stint at the Club Zanzibar, he danced in Times Square to aid the cancer drive, and on Sunday night was guest artist on the Philco Radio "Hall of Fame."

Bojangles, now 67, is observing his 60th year on the stage. He did his famous time step, tapping his way from 43rd to 44th St. and back again, turning the area into a giant collection box for the $12,000,000 campaign to fight cancer.

Sat 4-27-46

Also Dedicated Pylon

Robinson's feet were doing their part for the drive and toward dedication of the 40-foot red, white and blue pylon which will serve as contribution center in the square during April, Cancer Control Month.

He appeared first on the platform at the pylon and announced he would dance around the square if the throngs watching would "rain money down in the streets," he said:

"I feel like dancing, but you must throw me plenty of money."

Netted More than $500

His dancing netted more than $500. He was wearing a dazzling gold costume, topped with a matching hat bearing white ostrich plumes. A trio headed by Claude Hopkins played the musical accompaniment while professional models gathered the money into hats.

Robinson related some of his earlier experiences Sunday night on the "Hall of Fame" program, as well as demonstracing his role in "The Hot Mikado" and his version of "dancing 'em out of Harlem."

Now drawing in the neighbor-

hood of $3,000 weekly, Bojangles related that his first job was shelling peas at two cents a quart, netting him 65 cents a day.

Lost Seven Years

He also said that he "lost the first seven years of his life getting ready for show business."

Among the highlights of his life were his breaking into the big-time on the same program with Eva Tangley and his stage appearance with Sarah Bernhardt who was getting $10,000 weekly, paid in gold, he said.

His greatest experience was a command performance before the King of England. He also admitted that he had never taken dancing lessons.

Taught Famous Personages

Among his pupils have been such figures as Shirley Temple, Fred and Paula Stone, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, but said Bill: "Sophie Tucker was my toughest pupil."

Among those he has performed with are Ben Bernie, Theodore Roberts, Eddie Leonard, Bert Williams, Florence Mills, Anna Held, "and my very personal friend, the late Will Rogers."

Tomorrow 67-year-old Bill "Bojangles" Robinson celebrates his sixtieth year in show business. A party is being given for him at the Cafe Zanzibar, where he is now appearing. The announcement says Mr. Robinson attributes his long life and bountiful energy to the fact that he doesn't drink or smoke, but that he eats quarts of ice cream each day.

Bill Robinson on Stage 60 Years

Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, now 67 years old, will celebrate his sixtieth year in show business on April 29. The dancer made his initial stage appearance in a show entitled "The South Before the War" in Richmond, Va., and was last seen on Broadwy in "Memphis Bound."

Broadway to Honor Bill Robinson For 60 Years in Show Business

Bojangles Admits It's a Long Time, but He Doesn't Want to Hear Talk of Retiring—He'll Dance at Fete Tonight

By LOUIS CALTA

Bill Robinson, better known as Bojangles, readily will concede that sixty years in show business is a long enough time, but petulantly refuse to reconcile that admission with any thought of retirement. The nimble-footed dancer, whom Broadway will honor tonight for his long tenure in the entertainment field, hits the ceiling at the mere mention of possible withdrawal from the public eye.

Interviewed in his dressing room at the Cafe Zanzibar, shortly before a performance, Bojangles fairly bellowed: "Me, retire? I've just started. I don't think about retiring. I'm going to keep on dancing." His belligerent mood passed quickly, however. Grinning expansively, the performer, who once played the title role in the jazz version of "The Mikado," related how every night he jokingly informs the audience of his intention to quit show business to become "Emperor of Japan."

"Do you know," he confided bemusedly, "after every show at least one or two people come into my dressing room to find out whether it's true and when it's going to happen."

He Will 'Just Dance' Tonight

He has nothing special in mind for tonight's occasion when friends, former colleagues and prominent persons of the theatrical world will gather at his place of employment to pay their respects. "I'll just dance," he said simply. The remark drew a nod of approval from Marty Forkins, his manager and alter ego for the last forty years. "FFormer Commissioner [Edward P.] Mulrooney best expressed it," explained Mr. Forkins, "when he said, 'Bojangles really talks with his feet.'"

The veteran performer, who will be 68 years old next month, intends to go on giving three shows nightly at the club until June and then hopes to go to the West Coast while appearing in vaudeville. Was the New York stage beckoning? "No, not at the moment," Mr. Robinson said, but hoped that it would be some time in the near future.

Regarded as perhaps the greatest living tap dancer, Mr. Robinson could not say whether he detected a trend in contemporary tap dancing. "I don't see anything new in dancing," he remarked. Gene Kelly, he explained, is a combination tap and ballet dancer, while Fred Astaire's style is eccentric. He rates Georgie Tapps as tops in the field of straight tap dancing and has high praise for Paul Draper's ballet style of dancing.

Modern Dancers' Faults Cited

The fault with the modern tap dancer, Mr. Robinson said, is that "he dances continually without a break," making for repetitious and monotonous movements. Moreover, he asserted, music alone should be the basic determining factor for dance patterns and not acrobatic stunts and other tricks currently employed. The soft-shoe king illustrated his point with a few steps, dancing agilely in the crowded quarters of his room.

His weight, he says, is 160 pounds, never gaining or losing a pound. His hair is black, short and kinky with no visible signs of graying. "I feel fine and hope to be dancing until I'm 100," he said. He has no formula for longevity, although for years friends have attributed his excellent health to the fact that he consumes four quarts of ice cream every day. He says

Bill Robinson

the dish forms the main course of his meals simply because he likes ice cream.

The well-preserved dancer, who still holds the title of uncontested "running backward champion" for his ability to cover seventy-five yards in that fashion in about eight seconds, admits, however, to abstaining from smoking and from liquor. But in the matter of food his tastes are catholic. He will eat anything, at any time.

First Performance at 7 Years

He could not remember how many dance shoes he had worn out since he first appeared, at 7, in a tab show entitled "The South Before the War" back in 1886 in Richmond, Va. He estimates that he has played more than 100,000 performances and earned more than $3,000,000. For his first appearance in show business he was paid 50 cents a night. "I was a member of a group of pickaninnies in the minstrel dancing chorus," he recalled.

He was born in Richmond, Va., May 25, 1878, and was reared by his slave grandmother after the death of his parents. As a pickaninny dancer he toured the neighboring South and also appeared at social and other functions. Later he went to Washington, where he became a friend of Eddie Leonard, a former minstrel. He remained in the capital until 1895, working in the daytime and dancing at night until he subsequently joined George Cooper in vaudeville. Their success was marked by appearances at Tony Pastor's, on the Keith Circuit and in the Percy Williams houses.

Branching out on his own after the death of his partner, Bojangles achieved his first distinct success in New York as star of Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds" of 1927. The show ran for one year. Three years later he was a star again in a show produced by Mr. Forkins at the Liberty Theatre called "Brown Buddies," running thirty-eight weeks.

In 1932 he went to Hollywood to appear in "Dixiana," in which he performed his famous dance creation—dancing up and down a flight of stairs. This earned him a five-year contract with Fox and an appearance with Shirley Temple, whom he taught to tap dance, in "The Little Colonel." Subsequently, he was seen in "Hooray for Love," "Parade of 1934," "Little Miss Rebel," "Old Kentucky" and "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm." Recently, he was starred with Lena Horne in "Stormy Weather." Broadway saw him last in "Memphis Bound."

Richmond's Bill Robinson, Celebrating 60 Years as Showman, Wants 'a Lot More'

NEW YORK, April 23—(UP)—Bill Robinson celebrates his sixtieth year in show business next Monday. And he's already got a soft shoe routine in rehearsal for his centennial.

He'll live to be 100. He said so himself today.

"I'll just keep on dancin'," Bojangles said. "I don't think about retiring. I don't think about dying except when lightning strikes. I know I'm going to be struck by lightning one day."

Born in Richmond, Va., on May 25, 1879, raised by his grandmother, a former slave, Bojangles danced professionally for the first time when he was 7.

"I got me 50 cents that first night," he said. "I was one of 12 pickaninnies in the minstrel dancing chorus." Name of the show—"The South Before the War."

Earnings Soar

He got better billing in "Blackbirds," 1927; "Brown Buddies," 1928; the "Hot Mikado," 1939; in movies like "The Little Colonel," with Shirley Temple. His name has appeared on theater marquees in every city in the country since 1897. His total earnings add to more than $3,000,000, and Bojangles was proud of that.

"I'm well off," he said. "And I don't guess there's anyone in show business got nicer memories than me. I'm going to get a lot more before I'm through. I won't be old till my feet hurt, and they only hurt when I don't let 'em dance enough."

Bojangles said he has played more than 100,000 performances. He's never missed a show. Not even when his temperature was 104 degrees, and a doctor stood in the wings while he played the "Hot Mikado."

Recalls Cities

"I remember Chicago when cable cars ran on State Street, and Minneapolis when the women folks really dressed warm for Winter, and Los Angeles when most of the streets was nothing but mud tracks," Robinson said. "And right now I could still dance for an hour at a time, or beat Jesse Owens in a 100-yard race with me running backwards."

At Broadway's Cafe Zanzibar, however, the soft shoe king steps softer than he used to.

"I sweats a bit," Robinson said.

So he sings and jokes more than he dances now. His staccato steps are a bit shorter, but Robinson said he planned it that way.

Only one thing makes him sad. "I've seen so many stars fall down," he said. "Liquor, gambling, not knowing how to grab success and hold it. And in every generation I want to tell the show kids to be careful of what they've got. But they don't ever listen to Uncle Billie."

Robinson will take his first drink in 20 years at the Zanzibar Monday night when Mayor William O'Dwyer opens an all-star Bojangles anniversary celebration. Robinson's second wife, Elaine, 24, will be there. Bojangles will make a speech to her.

"Sister, you're a beautiful young child," he'll say. "I hope when you get to be my age, you'll have my pep."

Democracy Reigns As Bojangles Is Paid High Tribute

Pittsburgh Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa.

By BILLY ROWE, Theatrical Editor

NEW YORK—Here last Monday night at the Zanzibar Cafe where he heads an all-star show, Bill Robinson celebrated his sixtieth anniversary before the spotlight. The largest gathering ever recorded on Broadway turned out to pay him deserved hosannas, leaving little doubt that as far as the street was concerned, it was "Bojangles' Night." Sat. 5-11-46

Since he entered the spotlight profession sixty years ago, many grand things have been said about the grand old man of the theatre. As a trouper and an artist he has no peers. His dancing feet has carried him to great heights throughout the length and breadth of the theatrical world. What he has accomplished with them is an integral part of its lucid history.

Bowing at his shrine here last week were the greats and near greats, past and present, who watched him come up to cling tenaciously to the title, "The world's greatest tap dancer."

RARE TREAT

For those whose generation saw the birth and growth of vaudeville it was a night that will not soon be forgotten. For those of this decade it was a rare treat for here was democracy honoring a man who had made the grade.

Though undoubtedly the most honored man in the profession, those who recognizes his achievements found room for more Monday night. From Gene Buck, president, ASCAP, he received a plaque. From the American Guild of Variety Artists, Dave Fox, secretary of the New York local, brought an award of a lifetime membership. Over WEAF performer after performer heaped words of praise upon his sixty-seven-year old head which today doesn't look a second over thirty.

Never in the history of the great street have so many renowned performers been seen together under one roof. Those who came to pay tribute to the great dancer included artists who stepped out of many years of retirement to tell the young world about this phenomenal man who has harried every known and important theatrical horizen in the world.

Among the many were W. C. Handy, who gave the world this new kind of music with his immortal "St. Louis Blues"; Maude Nugent, who composed "Sweet Rosie O'Grady"; Mae Murray of film fame, Noble Sissle, Lucy Dale Ward, Billy Gould, Benny Davis, Hugh Herbert, Jeanette Dupree, Lew Leslie and just about every youthful performer on Broadway who wasn't working. Among that group were the Nicholas Brothers, Ray Bolger, Rex Ingram, Erskine Hawkins, Billy Eckstine, Luis Russell, Max Baer and Maxie Rosenbloom, just to name a few.

Bronx Hails Bill Robinson With Club 845 Star Show

Amsterdam News New York, N.Y. Sat. 8-31-46

The Bronx saluted Bill (Bojangle) Robinson Friday night with as daramatic and spectacular a demonstration as ever put on in a night club and the overflow crowd at the Club 845 on Prospect Avenue honored the 68-year-old tap dancer with a thunderous ovation that caused him to slip away and to the dressing rooms there to weep unrestrainedly on the shoulders of close friends.

"I've had a lot of nights in my time," the famous performer told the audience as emcee Ralph Cooper looked on, "but this is the night I've been loooking forward to all my life—a night among my own people. Nattily attired in a rust-colored sports jacket, slacks and black and white shoes, Bill Johnson looked anything but what he is supposed to be at 68. As chipper as Ralph Cooper, who himself is a bundle of effervescent energy, Robinson laughed, kidded, told jokes and danced with his pretty wife, Elaine, until the presentation of a bronze plaque from citizens of the Bronx was made to him by Cooper. Paul Bascomb led Betti Mays' band into "Auld Lang Syne," Robinson rushed off the cabaret floor, through the kitchen and into the basement dressing rooms where he wept freely.

It was a long and eventful night, studded with 4-star performers by the inimitable Gatemouth Moore, blues singing sensation; Patterson and Jackson, the 'Two Tons Of Fun;" the famous Deep River Boys Quartet, Phil and Audrey, exotic dance stars; Betti Mays and her band, all of whom are part of a fast-moving, sparkling revue, the new Club 845 presentation. Then there were such folk who were introduced and who spoke about Robinson as Henry Armstrong, former world champion; Dan Burley and Tommy Watkins of the Amsterdam News; Fredi Washington of the Voice, G. Phil Williams, the owner of a chain of Harlem taverns; Creole Pete Robertson, restaurateur; Billy Shaw, Moe Gale Agency talent agent; Arthur Leonard, movie director; the comedy team of Howell and Bowser; Apus and Estrelita, just back from an overseas USO Camp Shows tour, and there were many others, all of whom eulogized Robinson to the skies.

Robinson, talking calmly and to the point, drew spontaneous applause as he explained why so many people get mixed up as to what he has tried to do in the past. He used as an illustration the moving picture, "One Mile From Heaven," in which he appeared with a mixed cast, including Fredi Washington. "I was a negro policeman in that picture," Bill said, "and I was locking up white gangsters, beating them over the head with my nightstick, and kicking them around. They barred the picture in the South because of that. Now if the script had called for me to be beaten by a white policeman, people would holler that I had taken an Uncle Tom part."—D.B.

BILL (BOJANGLES) ROBINSON and his charming wife Elaine, who were honored at big Bronx Salute to the famed tapdancer Friday, night at Club 845 auspices of Ralph Cooper, Betti Mays and Ralph Bastone.

Bill Robinson Says He Has Earned, Given Away Over $3,000,000

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 9-7-46

NEW YORK — (ANP) — A recipe for lifelong happiness is given in the October American Magazine by dancer Bill "Bojangles" Robinson who says that fear and suspicion are the basis for much of the unfriendliness existing in the world today.

The motto of the 68-year-old trouper is avoid suspicions and be a giver, sharing your time, energy, money and happiness with those less fortunate.

"If we go around suspecting and fearing the people of other countries, of other races and creeds, we are going to set up forces that will keep us from making their friendship, and them from making ours, ever," Bill states. "I tell you, it's a wonderful thing to meet people without suspicion."

Bill is aware that a lot of people think him foolish because he has given away much of the $3,000,000 he estimates he has earned in 60 years of professional entertaining.

"But," he explains, "there plenty of other folks who thi

a pretty good fellow because I helped them along when the going was tough. I feel a person has got to be a giver.

"The way I look at it, I can work and work and dance a million miles and make a million dollars, and the only good money is to me is to keep my family and friends well and happy; to give me a home and a good car to ride in, and all the ice cream I can eat.

"Taking an interest in other people and sharing happiness with them keeps me young. When I think how little I started out with and how much I have today, it seems like a miracle and I have to share it. In a way, I get a share of all other people's energy and youth when I make them happy and take an interest in them."

Esquire All American Award

B'way Columnist Awards Eskies

Earl Wilson, Broadway columnist of the NY Post, who was on hand at the Zanzibar nite club recently to present Cootie Williams and Ella Fitzgerald with awards they won for having been chosen "best trumpeter" and "best girl singer" respectively in the annual Esquire Magazine poll. Note: Cootie is holding two eskies as he was also presented (a little tardily, perhaps) with the same award which he won in '45.

Chamber Music Champs Receive Esquire All American Awards

Before a studio audience packed to standing room only, while millions listened via the airways King Cole and his men received the gold statuette of "Esky" symbolical of tops as the finest small combo in the land. Pictured are two other gold, star winners including, left to right: Orson Wells, the winner of a gold Esky as the most interested and active person in the efforts promoting American Jazz; Nat 'King' Cole himself, and Oscar Moore, guitarist in the Cole Trio, who received the award as the best guitarist in the land in any band. Leonard Feather, musical director of the program and a writer on the staff of Esquire is making the presentations while Edward Kennedy, "The Duke" of Ellington, winner of the gold award for having the top band of the land stands by in the rear.

66c 1946

General

Phil is guiding piano light of his combination, the "Phil Moore Four."

Look Des Moines, Iowa

10-15-46

Phil Moore

The author of *Shoo, Shoo Baby* is a top arranger

LOOK & LISTEN

Phil Moore is one of the top arrangers and composers in the band business. Now he's performing as a band leader. With the "Phil Moore Four"—bass, drums, trumpet and himself on piano—he has been touring the country and turning out records. His latest, for Musicraft, is *She's a Rank Chick,* and *Romance Without Finance Is a Nuisance.*

As a composer, Phil made solid hits with *Shoo, Shoo Baby, I'm Gonna See My Baby* and *I Want a Little Doggie.* As an arranger, he has done important work on the music for every kind of movie, radio show and recording.

Phil, a Portland, Oregon, boy, was an accomplished serious pianist at 12, at 15 played "jazz" in a night club for 50 per cent of the kitty. Take-home pay was usually $2 a night. After two years at the University of Washington, where he played football and majored in music, Phil went to Hollywood.

Here he landed a five-year contract with MGM as a staff arranger. He often worked with Lena Horne. *Shoo, Shoo* was the result of a "riff" he was humming to her one day. It caught on, sold 2,000,000 records, has been featured in seven movies.

Now Phil is planning a large orchestra which will feature the "Four." He feels that a good thing can always be bigger.

Ink Spots, Crosby Rate As All-Timers

The Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky. Fri. 11-29-46

Glenn Miller Also High On Best-Selling Records

Chicago, Nov. 28 (U.P.)—The best-selling popular records of all time have been announced by DeWitt Eaton, vice president of a Chicago firm manufacturing juke boxes.

Eaton asked R.C.A. Victor and Decca Records, Inc., to name those popular records which have the greatest sale since the formation of their companies.

Their selection of 20 each, plus the names of the musicians waxing the records, in order of popularity:

Dalhart, Britt Mentioned.

R.C.A. Victor:

"Boogie Woogie," Tommy Dorsey; "Begin the Beguine," Artie Shaw; "Whispering," Paul Whiteman; "Chattanooga Choo-Choo," Glenn Miller; "Prisoner's Song," Vernon Dalhart; "Three O'Clock In the Morning," Paul Whiteman; "Ramona," Gene Austin; "Dardanella," Selvin's Novelty Orchestra; "Till the End of Time," Perry Como; "There's a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere," Elton Britt;

"There Are Such Things," Tommy Dorsey; "Piano Concerto in B Flat," Freddy Martin; "Beer Barrel Polka," Will Glahe; "Elmer's Tune," Glenn Miller; "In the Mood," Glenn Miller; "Sunrise Serenade," Glenn Miller; "My Blue Heaven," Gene Austin; "Yes, We Have No Bananas," the Great White Way Orchestra; "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," Paul Whiteman; "Blue Yodel," Jimmie Rodgers.

Mills Brothers Listed.

Decca:

"White Christmas," Bing Crosby; "Silent Night," Bing Crosby; "I'll Be Around," Mills Brothers; "Don't Fence Me In," Bing Crosby and the Andrew Sisters; "I'm Making Believe," Ink Spots and Ella Fitzgerald; "Rum and Coca-Cola," Andrew Sisters; "Pistol Packin' Mama," Bing Crosby and the Andrew Sisters; "You Always Hurt the One You Love," Mills Brothers; "Going My Way," Bing Crosby; "I'll Be Home for Christmas," Bing Crosby;

"You'll Never Know," Dick Haymes; "Sunday, Monday or Always," Bing Crosby; "Green Eyes," Jimmy Dorsey; "To Each His Own," Ink Spots; "The Gypsy," Ink Spots; "Chopin's Polonaise," Carmen Cavallaro; "I Can't Begin to Tell You," Bing Crosby; "In My Arms," Dick Haymes; "Is You Is Or Is You Ain't," Bing Crosby and the Andrew Sisters; "Street of Dreams," Ink Spots.

Composer of 200 Song Hits

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 11-2-46

The Prince of Whales and Charlie Chaplin are Among the Close friends of this man who took lessons in Paris at $100 per and taught Carmen Miranda when she was a stage struck "child".

Maria Costello, vocalist and torch singer with the Stretton orchestra.

By GEORGE W. MOUZON

Gordon Stretton, creative composer, arranger and musician is ten little men rolled into one.

A few inches over five feet, he weighs about 140 pounds. His clothes are very fashionable. He is naive, sentimental, sensitive, with much education and, impulsive.

The fact that he became a great composer and arranger shows how much more spirit, soul, and character there is in Gordon Stretton than appears on the surface.

He is the rare man who is not ashamed to cry at a tear-jerking movie. He is sensitive in more than the technical sense.

In origin, Stretton is strictly big city proletariat, so typical in his upbringing, that he might be studied as a test tube of modern life. When very young he lost both of his parents and was placed in an orphan asylum, of which his memories are not very pleasant.

You'd never guess that he'll be sixty his next birthday, unless he told you. He looks only thirty.

Irish and West Indian

Born in London, 1886, his father was Irish and his mother West Indian. At the age of nine, he joined the Troupe called the "Casey Colored Boys," stayed with them until he joined the British Army, where he saw four years of service.

After leaving the Army he migrated to Nice, Monte Carlo. Here he organized his first jazz band.

At this time he played drums and the banjo. His first band was composed of musicians who later rose to great heights in their own rights. Most noticeable is Harry Roy, present version of Paul Whiteman.

From Monte Carlo, as toast of the nobility, he was summoned to Brussell Belgium to play for the King. He went to stay for one week and stayed for two years. While here he acquired one of the largest racing stables in Belgium with twenty-six thoroughbreds carrying his colors.

But here Don Cupid fired an arrow in his direction coming from a countess high in the esteem of his highness, the King, and quick departure was forced on Stretton.

It was here at this theater in Rio de Janeiro that Gordan Stretton gave Carmen Miranda her first lessons which later led her to stardom.

Arriving in London from Belgium, he soon became the toast of London. This was due largely to the open friendship and admiration of the then Prince of Wales, who was at that time a Colonel in the Welsh Guards.

Worked With Chaplin

This friendship still exists today. There was never a party for nobility in which Gordon Stretton and his music was not present. He was the official orchestra for London's highbrow.

While in London, Gordon met and worked with the comedian who later came to America to capture in heart, in laughter Charlie Chaplin. To date they hold reunions whenever Chaplin is in any part of South America.

With a burning desire to reach the pinnacle of success, life in London soon bored Stretton and he moved to Paris to conquer the field of Opera, his secret love.

In Paris he studied under Tony Balbis, who also taught Caruso, at the costly price of 1,000 francs (approximately then) $100 per lesson.

While here he met the French musical comedy star, Maurice Chevalier, who, beside starring in "The Naughty Boy," also ran an ultra-exclusive club, "Les Acaecias."

He taught Chevalier his first dance steps. Dooley Wilson of motion pictures, theatre, and night club fame was appearing in Paris at the same time and he and Stretton were constant companions.

Speaks 6 Languages

Here Stretton mastered six languages and won a scholarship to the conservatory of Belgium, which he accepted, only because his ex-friend, the King had long been dead. At the Conservatory he won first prize for two consecutive years for his works.

Being a realist, it was here he realized that Opera could and would not offer him much, if anything. Largely because of his size and color.

So he made up his mind to pack up his belongings and his wife, whom he had married in London, and shuffle off to Argentina, and here he has been since.

In South America, every musical honor that could be bestowed upon him, has been. He has played his own music and sung for kings, presidents, dukes and duchesses, and the run of Who's Who in America. He has composed and written more than 200 song hits in Spanish, Irish and English.

One of his prized possessions is a drum skin autographed by the Prince of Wales, King Faroux of Egypt, King Albert of Belgium, King George, Emperor Haile Selassie, Admiral Halsey, President Vargas and many others.

Bridge Champ

For ten seasons he has been at South America's most fashionable resort hotel, Grand Hotel Nogaro at Mar Del Plata.

In the City of Buenos Aires, he has won eight cups in Bridge tournaments sponsored by the Camet Club, also, the City Bowling Championship. He has won several golf championships, most notable at the Mar Del Plata course, where he shot the only 62 ever played on the course.

Today Stretton can hit top C with mere ease. Thinks the hardest song to sing is from the Opera "Rusticana," meaning white flower. A gnawing desire for perfection makes him practice at the piano four hours daily. It's his plan to accompany himself.

Outside of arranging, composing, and writing, he also plays saxophone, guitar, drums, trumpet and piano. He has in his repertoire more than 2,000 songs, the words to all he knows. He can sing, and does at request, any American or popular song from early 1900 to the present time.

Featured at Buenos Aires

"Hey Bob le Be Bop" had to be added, because of so many requests from American officers who gathered at Charley's American Bar, where he is currently featured on Buenos Aires's great white way, The Corrientes.

He thinks that the average popular singer has a much harder job than opera singers and that Opera in the new and old world is dead.

Gordon Stretton, composer, arranger and musician as he looks today.

He's surprised that more American musicians have not given Argentina or South America a thought in the development of music and claims that we are born with syncopation, but with a little dash of color, there are great possibilities.

Reason for Stretton's youthfulness, is because three months of every year, he and his wife vacation, at which time he rides a bike 60 miles daily, plenty of walking and plenty of fresh fruit.

One of his most interesting stories is of the time he took a show to Rio De Janerio, "Little Esta." After the show, he visited the Presidential Palace with President Vargas and later the home of a family he had met earlier.

After dinner with them, he promised the daughter if she would come to the theatre the next afternoon he would give her a lesson in stage poise, how to walk on a stage.

She had never appeared on the stage, but was stage struck and possessed plenty of talent.

Former Harlemite Advised Her to Come to America

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 11-2-46

Was Touring Europe With Little Esther When He First Heard Brazilian Girl Sing

Photo taken at the home of Generosa Pence in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1931. Left to right: Gordon Strutton, band leader; Miss Ruth Jones, Sidney Garner (fourth), Little Esther, Mr. Owalor of Brazil, then fiance of Miss Carmen Miranda, right.

By EDGAR A. WIGGINS

PARIS—(ANP) — A headline story appearing in the English newspaper "Daily Express," of June 17, this year, publicizes with

Carmen Miranda-Sidney Garner

U.S. income tax statistics, Carmen Miranda, Hollywood actress, as being one of the highest paid women in America.

In Paris, Sidney Garner, formerly of New York's Harlem, confirms his statement with old Brazilian newspaper clippings and photos, that he was instrumental in starting the Portuguese-born luminary up the "stairway to the stars."

The story goes back to a day in June, 1931: Garner, then manager of the wonder girl, "Little Ester," 8-year-old dancer, comedienne and singer, arrived in Rio de Janero from Europe with his child prodigy who opened at the Cine Theatre Eldorado and scored such a success that Generosa Pence, co-owner of the establishment, honored her with a dinner-party in his luxurious apartment.

Miss Miranda Present

Miss Miranda, then 19, who was born in Marco Canavezes, Portugal, but had been living in Brazil for some years, was among the invited guests and met Garner for the first time.

After dinner, Miss Miranda asked Little Ester to sing a song she had enjoyed hearing the child-star sing on the stage. But Little Ester refused.

"Well," said Miss Miranda (quoting Garner), "If you won't sing for me, then I'll sing for you."

Overcome by Her Voice

Miss Miranda began to sing and Garner admits that he was overwhelmed by her voice, talent and personality. Immediately after she finished, Garner asked Miss Miranda if she was an artist, and received a negative answer.

"But my dear girl," said Garner, "you are wasting your time like that. Why you're terrific. You've got everything that it takes: beauty, youth and talent. Why if you went to America you'd create a sensation. Believe me, you'd be a star in Hollywood in little time."

But Miss Miranda only laughed and thought she was being kidded. Nevertheless, Garner was persistent and continued to persuade her.

Received First Contract

On Sunday, Oct. 25, 1931, Rio's principal newspaper, "A Patria," gave considerable space to Garner's "find," whom he termed as "a revelation of Brazilian talent," and his prediction of her unquestionable rise to stardom should she go to Hollywood.

An impresario in Buenos Aires who sailed from New York in Oct., 1914, on the first Brazil and Argentine. Retired From Show Business Returning from South America around her and toured Europe, staff of the American Chamber of Commerce, 21 Avenue George V, and is a collector of rare and modern stamps.

Red Cross ship (The "Ham- in 1932, Garner fell ill in Portu- the Hamburg-American gal. Little Esther, who was born bring Red Cross work in Chicago, and her aunt, Miss urope for World War I Ruth Jones, her accompanist, were in Paris ever since. ooth tired and homesick, so they World War II, he was returned to the States. by the Germans. He Garner, now 50, has retired nanager of Little Esther from show business and lives in 1929, following her ar peace and comfort. He is on the e on a tour. built a show

Left New York in 1914

PM. New York, N. Y. Wed. 1-1-47

POPS FOSTER, veteran jazz bass player, gives some hot tips to Charles Traeger, 20, bassist with the Scarsdale High School Gang, and Bob Wilber, 18, clarinetist and leader of the Gang which will play in the Mezz Mezzrow *Really the Blues* concert at Town Hall tonight. The 'teen-age Scarsdale group will portray the famous Austin High School Gang of Chicago in the concert, a musical re-enactment of scenes from Mezzrow's recently published autobiography. Wed. 1-1-47

66c 1946 General

PART II OF A FOUR-PART SERIAL

The Dancing Twins

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

A real life story of a team that danced itself around the world only finally to become a war casualty.

Sat. 11-2-46

Jim and Sam Mackey, age 17, arrived in Honolulu as tap dancers with a band and vaudeville revue brought to the islands by the author, Irene West. She tells how they hitch-hiked from Kansas City to Los Angeles at the age of nine, got a contract at Sebastian's Cotton Club, only to be dragged home by their father, who later took them to Reno and then agreed to let them go to Honolulu with Miss West, where they were a hit. Then they embarked for Shanghai. Now read on.

Shanghai to Manila

The Twins and I stepped ashore in Shanghai. The largest city they had ever seen. That seething, cosmopolitan "Paris of the Orient" must have amazed them but the boys took everything in their stride. Only white performers raved with astonishment at each new port. I never knew what The Twins thought of the magnificence of the Canidrome Ballroom, that elite rendezvous of the English, American, French, Russian and Chinese or of the first class accommodations of our hotel. They just seemed to fit in.

Miss West

The Canidrome had a Russion floor show. The leader of the orchestra was the popular pianist, Teddy Weatherford of Chicago. Opening night came and the valet had The Twins faultlessly dressed, always with white spats and gloves. I was anxious to see them duplicate their phenomenal success in Honolulu and Tokyo.

Their dancing panicked that Canidrome audience, accustomed to feature attractions from the States and Europe. Never had the Shanghai press been so lavish in praise. They were truly the toast of Shanghai and referred to as "the adorable Twins." Our engagement of three months was extended to six.

Sought by Girls

The boys were growing up; they began eyeing the girls and the girls (all sorts) sought them day and night. Though only 17, they were now established professional artists—born dancers, with born showmanship.

Mama was always on hand, gowned and jeweled at a reserved table in the ballroom. I was introduced to a most attractive American mother, 35, and her 17-year-old daughter—Pittsburgh millionaires.

They became inamored of The Twins. Right here I was to learn what it meant to mother a couple of dancing geniuses of a race of whose psychology I knew no hing. I understood white, brown and yellow artists but nothing in my experience ever worked with The Twins. As time went on it was difficult to say whether I managed them or they managed me.

Almost A Riot

Ere long this pair was meeting the boys nightly against my protests, lavishing money and gifts upon them and dancing with them all night in road houses. The climax came when the American Consul showed me letters from service men stationed there, declaring they would beat up The Twins if they did not "lay off" those two white women. The Consul was concerned and I was worried. The Twins were young and flattered. Mother had chosen Jim and daughter chose Sam.

It took a lawyer's threat to make the women break that foursome before a scandal broke that would blight the boys' excellent reputation. After that they went to Tea Dansants and danced with Russian and Oriental "taxi dancers." I was amused when they told me they liked the Oriental girls better than the Russians.

I had trouble keeping an amah (maid servant) for The Twins; they teased them in true Yankee style and amahs were afraid of them.

One day the boys came home with a basket of baby ducks and insisted on raising them in the bath tub. I also had valet trouble because of their mischievous playfulness until I hired a 6 ft. 3 Russian, then all was peaceful in the dressing room.

The Twins had an extensive stage and street wardrobe and it required two servants to keep them dressed as my proud heart desired.

They Learn the Hard Way

Shanghai was a terrific engagement. After six months steady dancing I took the boys to Hong Kong two weeks in advance of opening to give them a rest at beautiful Repulse Bay.

After our theatre engagement, we played the Peninsular Hotel in Kowloon, across the bay from Hong Kong.

Here it was warm weather and the boys preferred tray service in their suite rather than evening dress with me in the dining room. I happened in one day when they were having dinner. What I saw was like a cafeteria; four jack tables with large silver trays laden with food fit for a king.

The Twins clad only in shorts, were lifting the silver lids and making their choice of delicious concoctions, all new to them.

Stewards had brought the fabulous menu, mostly in French, and the boys had marked about one-third of the menu. This had gone on several days before the manager spoke to me about it. He said, rather timidly, for the boys were packing his ballroom, "Miss West, The Twins are welcome to all the food they can eat but there must be something wrong, so much food is carried in and out untouched."

That Pair Again

I explained and we both had a good laugh. After that a steward was sent to them to explain what the dishes were in English.

Manila was next on the route. Their dancing at the Lyric Theatre electrified Filipinos, American civilians and service men. It was an extended engagement.

Great crowds of natives followed the boys on the streets. Who do you think blew in from Shanghai? Mother and daughter! Started the chasing all over again.

My Jim was nearly shot by a Filipino who was jealous of the mother's affection. I had a call from the police and was told to stop The Twins being seen with them in public.

I was furious—and when I told the Shanghai story to the officers, they called on the pale faced women and threatened to give them a "blue ticket" out unless they kept away from The Twins. This sort of thing was all new to me. I was delighted on that occasion to sail for Singapore.

League of Nations

Before leaving Manila I added to the family, the Dixie Sisters. Their father was an American colored man, the mother Spanish and Filipino. Also I added two Hawaiian foster sons of mine, one mixed with American Jew and the other a strapping big brown skin ,half Hawaiian and half Samoan. I now had a League of Nations. This sextette was going right through to Paris. I was told I could never amalgamate that troupe of mixed brown skins but I did.

At the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, we made the same sensational success—Twins a riot, the other artists a hit. Rose and Virginia Dixie did harmony numbers at the piano and danced the hula to the Hawaiian boys' steel and guitar. A theatre engagement gave the natives a chance to see The Twins dance. They will never forget it.

In Singapore The Twins bought trumpets and saxaphones. They turned the Raffles Hotel into a madhouse, trying to reach Louis Armstrong's high note on the trumpet.

Add to this, ukuleles and practicing dancing in their suite, then imagine what it did to those quiet, conservative English guests!

The manager said, "Miss West, I've had to move half the guests from The Twins's side of the hotel; they are so noisy and playful."

I promised to scold them, since the manager would not, because of their popularity and drawing power. It was useless—no one could hold down those happy, healthy, young hellions.

They nearly drove the refined Dixie Sisters and the Hawaiians, son George and Duke, mad. The Twins were never mean or quarelsome, just vibrant with life. They had to amuse themselves.

We next sailed for Java to torment the Dutch and I mean torment, as well as thrill them to the core.

CONCLUSION

The Dancing Twins

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

A real life story of a team that danced itself around the world only finally to become a war casualty

Sat. 11-16-46

Irene West

this is Paris!" They were filled with expectations of life in the gayest city in the world. Not because of its size, for a sojourn in Shanghai, Bombay, Cairo and Milano had accustomed them to cities, but here they expected something startlingly different.

Before leaving Italy we met a femme whose chic, fascinating stage name was Topsy. She was Afro-American and English.

Her association with the troupe had been so pleasant that Topsy declared she would meet us in Paris, and she did. She and the Dixie Sisters became inseparable companions.

The Twins wished to star alone in Europe. Topsy coaxed me to let her work in my Hawaiian act, and since I was separating them

By IRENE WEST

At long last, my family of glowingly healthy and happy troubadours were able to exclaim. "S

from The Twins, it was arranged. She was very helpful, since she spoke a lot of French.

The Parting

Topsy was an acrobatic dancer of no mean ability and had appeared in the Follies Begere with the glamorous French star, Miss Stinguett, who had made a pet of Topsy.

I settled my whole family in Monmartre, the notoriously famous Latin quarter. We all loved its Bohemian atmosphere. I busied myself setting up the two acts and both were soon working—The Twins in a French revue and the Hawaiians with another revue that was to tour France, Switzerland and Belgium.

I dreaded parting with my three girls, and sons, George and Duke, but I had to remain with The Twins. The Twins opened at the Palace—their first closeup of a nude French chorus, but it did not shock them. Picture palaces and night clubs followed.

The Quintete's revue remained in the city some weeks, and we had a gay time together before parting. We met, among others from home, the Five Hot Shots and Louis Armstrong with wife Alpha.

Paris was full of memories for me. I recalled 1929, when I was going the pace with Valada Snow and "Bricktop." It was on the Riviera that year that I first met Nobel Sissle.

Learning to Drink

The Twins, I had dolled up anew by a smart French tailor. They insisted on the best quality in silk hats, tuxedos and "tails"—more expensive than necessary for stage work.

I was always so proud of them and we were so happy and prosperous. I took The Twins with me to the swankiest of restaurants and ballrooms. Only once were we held up at the entrance, while I explained that the boys were my adopted sons.

Up to now, The Twins never drank intoxicants or smoked cigarettes. Older artists began kidding them about these sissy virtues. It hurt me terribly when I learned they were drinking and smoking.

Tears came to my eyes; the boys petted me and Sam said, "Mama, don't you know your babies have grown up?" It was true and, as manager, I had no authority to control their private lives.

The Twins were soon speeding up the Champs Elysess in a Rolls-Royce, guests of a champion West Indian pugilist. Gay parties held forth in this fighter's sumptuous apartment. The Twins met all sorts of girls who fell in love with them. I was in for a merry time controlling them in Paris.

Always Safe

I had done as much as any mother could to keep them straight, and worried a lot when they were out nights without me, but they always came up safe and smiling.

It came time for me to visit the other part of my family, which was now playing on the Riviera. I was responsible for a brood of seven and held that trust sacred. I found the Sunkist Five mighty happy and making a smash hit with the revue.

George was still protecting the girls, and lone eagle Duke went his way. All had admirers; I never knew how serious until later.

Rose was such a quiet, refined girl and never gave me a moment's anxiety. Virginia, 18 months younger, was like our Sammy—restless to be doing something or going places.

She took a bit of watching. I spent a happy week with them in beautiful Nice, visiting casinos and basking on the beach with the family.

Twins to Berlin

The Twins met me on arrival back in Paris. I could see they were jubilant about something and couldn't wait to tell me. A manager from Berlin had heard of The Twins' success and came to Paris to take us back with him, for two months, during the Christmas season.

He had promised the boys the best quality camel-hair overcoat for Christmas presents if they could persuade me to accept.

This meant setting back advance bookings. Manager Sherbini (an Egyptian) knew how. He got a doctor's certificate to state that The Twins must have a rest to avoid a breakdown.

Sherbini took us to Berlin at a time when Hitler was in power, and there was not supposed to be a colored act in all Germany. Into an ultra de luxe night club we went, owned by a German countess who evidently had a pull with authorities.

The only thing required of The Twins was to keep off the streets as much as possible and out of the later night spots.

Sherbini was grand to the boys; took them for long drives in his private car; made them welcome in his luxurious apartment, where they would play records all afternoon.

Loved by Germans

The Twins mixed with the audience at Sherbini's; patrons often opened champagne for them. Those high-class Germans showed no resentment — thrilled to the boys' dancing and made pets of them. The Twins fared better than I did. When Germans heard my American accent I could see they disliked me.

On Christmas Eve, I was struggling alone along the Fifth Avenue of Berlin, loaded with parcels, trying in vain to hail a taxi. A handsome young German offered to assist me. He rode with me to my hotel and thereafter became my chaperon and bodyguard for personally conducted tours of Berlin.

I soon learned that he was a spy. It didn't scare me, but it was proof that the authorities knew all about The Twins.

The money we made in Berlin had to be spent in Germany. Sam and Jim got the camel hair coats and looked stunning in them. The boys and I made one another expensive gifts.

Back to Paris

While in Berlin, Lou Leslie's "Blackbirds" revue was wiring all over the continent, trying to locate me for The Twins to appear in "Blackbirds." We finally got in contact but I could not get away from Sherbini's, so that engagement was lost.

I left The Twins a second time to visit the Sunkist Five in Brussels. Soon after, The Twins and I were back in Paris, also the French revue, so my family was again united, socially.

The boys and I left for London to appear in the Mayfair Hotel Ballroom. Sam and Jim took to London like ducks to water. They hadn't heard English spoken for nearly two years.

The Twins were now at the peak of perfection and sent English audiences whirling with enthusiasm. English girls went wild over their dancing—and them.

From the Mayfair, the boys featured in vaudeville theatres. They next starred in Glasgow, where Sammy was arrested. He went pheasant hunting on some nobel's estate. Mama pays a fine.

Girls and More Girls

Back to Paris we go. Girls were on our trail—French girls waiting for The Twins; English girls flying from London for week ends. Gentleman Jim held his head, but Baby Sam was like a ship without a rudder.

By now all members of the company were involved in love affairs and things began to pop.

A Martinique singer attempted suicide over Sammy; a Hungarian, whose partner had fallen in love with George and left his act, was threatening to shoot that Hawaiian on sight; Duke was living with an English band leader's wife who was sending threatening letters from London; a notorious lesbin was seriously angling for Virginia; Rose was insanely jealous and fighting with George; Topsy was wise and kept her nose clean.

After this juncture, I got a cable to return the Dixie Sisters at once: their mother was not expected to live. The girls' contract had expired, so I accompanied them to the boat in Marseille. Topsy went to Manila with them. George and Duke joined a band in Lyon, France.

Family Separated

The family I loved so dearly became separated. The Twins and I were alone in Paris. I saw less and less of Sam and Jim off the stage. They had many friends and were going their way socially.

I now received a cable calling me to New York. The Twins did not wish to return to the States, so I left them with an English manager and ten months' advance bookings.

From New York I was called to California and from there to Shanghai, expecting to return to Paris and The Twins via the Orient.

War breaks! I was delayed. Paris falls! I was frantic. Lost contact with The Twins' manager. I was torn with grief.

I waited and worried through all the war like any other mother over the fate of my artists in Europe and later in Manila. No word has yet come to me direct from The Twins.

The only news I have had was told me by Valada Snow here in Los Angeles. She said Jim had a nervous breakdown before Paris surrendered and was sent to a sanitarium. And that Sammy became lost to them, working somewhere alone in Europe.

I am always thinking lovingly of the boys, and praying that we will one day be reunited. I yearn to behold them in the lush of their splendid manhood. I repeat, "Dear God, be with them wherever they are."

Jim Crow Victim Turns The Afro-American Troubadour for Tolerance

Baltimore, Md. Sat. 8-10-46

Russell Daville, ex-GI, Sings of Sharecroppers and America's Racial and Religious Hatreds

NEW YORK

When Russell Daville enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps, hoping to become an aeronautical engineer, his officers thought otherwise after hearing him sing and sent him from camp to camp in the South, exhorting colored and white to work together for final victory.

When just out of the Army, Daville walked into a Los Angeles restaurant and sat down. The white waitress ignored him for a while. Then she drove him out, saying: "We don't serve n---rs here. You had better leave quietly, mister."

Those harsh experiences made him a troubadour on Crusade against intolerance. Now he is a sustaining artist on New York's radio station WLIB, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 6:30 p.m., hoping that his songs will help create "a little love and understanding."

RUSSELL DAVILLE

To Sing About Hatred

Daville sings in French, Spanish and Portuguese as well as English. "I want to sing about the French Maquis, the American sharecroppers, and about racial and religious hatreds," he says.

Although born in the French Wets Indies, he was raised in America. He won a B.A. degree at the University of Illinois and the degree of master of literature at Columbia.

He then went to France and became a student at the Sorbonne in Paris, appearing meanwhile as a singer with Maurice Chevalier, Josephine Baker and other Parisian celebrities.

A Fugitive from Hitler

The Germans struck at France and Daville. He fled to America to enter the Army. Two years later he received his honorable discharge and joined Katherine Dunham's troupe.

For the past year, he has been on the West Coast where he has been widely acclaimed for his original songs based on the humor and pathos of the everyday world.

Jackson Leighter, president of WLIB, heard him while he was singing on the radio in Los Angeles, and suggested that he come to New York. This he did, and the radio engagement followed.

Featured in Stein Play

His collection of songs of the Maquis was recently used in the Pasadena Playhouse as entr-acte music for a new play production by the late Gertrude Stein.

When Daville was chased out of the Los Angeles restaurant, that night, in the dead silence of his room he took his guitar and composed "Trouble, Trouble."

His first lines:

"I went into a restaurant the other day
All dressed in khaki, had my separation pay;
The waitress looked me straight in the face
And said, 'There's nothing in this restaurant that we
Serve your race.'
I understand what she was telling me.
She was telling me that my land ain't free.
Over yonder in my fox hole,
Wheer the nights were heavy and cold,
the weather was cold,
The bullets found that it was no disgrace
Not to discriminate against a color or a race."

In addition to a collection of songs of native Martinique flavor, Daville intends to sing of "Big Joe," truck driver on the Red Ball highway in France, of "Manuela," sweet heart of the Spanish Republican Army, and what he calls his "songs of social signifi-

86c 1946 Genera

Elizabeth Welch, Ex-'Blackbirds' Star, Stirs Raves Before London Footlights

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 7-6-46

By DOUGLASS HALL

(Special to the AFRO-AMERICAN)

LONDON—The Palladium, the largest variety house in this country, rocked with laughter and music the night I visited it. The show was "Happy and Glorious." And one of the top attractions was Elizabeth Welch, native of New York City.

I was elated with the spot given her in the show and she played it right up to the chest. Surrounded by an otherwise all-white cast, she sang several songs, biggest hit being W. C. Handy's "St Louis Blues."

Miss Welch was integrated into the heart of the show. She was not a special actor or an added attraction. She was a star. Her costumes were tops and the setting for her appearances could not be better. One time she came through the floor after a terrific build-up; another time she would scoop down from the skies. Each time the house would roar with applause.

ELIZABETH WELCH

Wouldn't Take in U. S.

Later in her dressing room, I asked her if she thought she would be given such a play-up on the stage in America. She readily admitted, "no". Perhaps she would be given a spot as a singer, or dancer, but the kind of part she had in "Happy and Glorious" would not be "stomached in the States."

She was curious about Lena Horne. All of the show people over here are. They are somewhat amazed as to her success. "Is she making any money?" they ask, "or is she living in name only?" They also mention Hazel Scott.

When I told her that I intended writing her up in the AFRO-AMERICAN, she was very much pleased but stated. "Oh, they do not know anything about me in the States. I have been over here ever since I have been able to hold a spot worthwhile on a stage." She was in the "Blackbirds of 1928."

No Gripe Against Home

She left the States in a normal fashion and is the only stellar attraction that I have encountered so far that did not have a personal gripe against the way colored performers are treated back there.

Although she has been back on many occasions to visit relatives, she didn't make a public appearance there. However, she plans to make another visit in the near future. She knows very few Americans, mostly those she met in Europe. And of course, they act just like the Europeans.

Very often after shows, Americans (usually white), come backstage bringing gifts of candy and flowers. They compliment her on her act and chat about America. They paint the picture of race relations much brighter than when she was there.

Worked Through Blitz

The interview drifted back to the days of the buzz-bomb in England. What did she do? Nothing - but work right on through the blitz.

The show, which was closing that week, was rounding out its 18th month of continuous showing, after many hot-jumps to give shows for service men throughout Europe. She had no trouble traveling with the cast. She was treated with all consideration and courtesy and was never a problem.

As we talked a representative of one of Hollywood's leading studios came in. He mumbled something about a deal. He wanted an answer as he was flying to America in the next few days. She would see him tomorrow. She would have lunch with him. Thanks.

I tried to get her to admit that she was about to make a movie deal in Hollywood. She would not. "If I do you will be the first to know about it", she jokingly said.

Hot Trumpeters Hailed in "Look"

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — Six of the nine top-ranking jazz musicians of America, called the 'Hot Trumpeters' in the July 23 issue of Look magazine, are Louis Armstrong, Cootie Williams, Rex Stewart, Roy Elridge, Bunk Johnson and Dizzy Gillespie.

According to Look, Armstrong is known as the 'King of Trumpeters' and has been hailed by critics as the most talented of all jazz musicians, although Cootie Williams, who once placed with Duke Ellington, is a great favorite.

Link Between New and Old

Roy Elridge, famous for piping on the upper register, is called the link between Armstrong and the modernists, while Rex Stewart, another Ellington graduate, has changed his style several times through the years. Sat. 7-27-46

Bunk Johnson was in action prior to World War I and has a limited technique in contrast to Dizzy Gilespie, newest and most discussed trumpeter today, who speciaizes in the high range screaming of be-bop music.

Together for First Time

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

SONNY TERRY

Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn and Louis Armstrong, generally regarded as the foremost figures in jazz history, pictured as Duke and Louie made their first joint waxing after more than 40 combined years of recording. They did "Long, Long Journey" with Louie offering a vocal as guest members of Esquire's All-American band. Strayhorn is the arranger. Sat. 7-27-46

The other "Hot Trumpeters", Harry James, Bobby Hackett and Pete Candoli are white.

Music in Review

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

By ROBERT CLAIBORNE

Blues at Midnight, the first of People's Songs' four "Midnight Special" concerts, drew an enthusiastic reception from a packed house at Town Hall last week. The program featured Sidney Bechet on clarinet and tenor sax, Pete Johnson, boogie-woogie star of Cafe Society, Sonny Terry on the harmonica, "Big Bill" Broomzey and Brownie McGhee, blues singers, Billy Thompson on bass and, as an added attraction, "Stick" McGhee and his "Gold Tub" band.

Though ostensibly supposed to explain the what and why of blues, the music was far superior to the explanations, the only serious criticism being that there was too little of it. Tues. 11-19-46

Johnson drew a fine hand for his three numbers, especially for **Four O'Clock Blues.** The unquestioned star of the evening, however, was Bechet. This was no reflection on the other performers, but simply a tribute to Bechet's well-known and terrific talents.

Broomzey provided another high point to the evening with his song "If you're white, you're all right and if you're brown, stick around but if you're black, brother, get back!" His guitar work, however suffered by comparison with Brownie McGhee's. Sonny Terry was fine, as usual.

Alan Lomax's commentary, while serving to tie the program together, added a note of novelty with his added little else, but little else was hand, consisting of guitar, washtub needed. The program, running con- —broomstick-and-twine (serving as siderably less than two hours, seem- bass) and a washboard with skillet, ed to this reviewer extraordinarily headlight and pot-lid attachments short. Though the purist might providing a rhythm section. The question whether everything pre- result, however, while adequate sented was in fact "folk music," it was more interesting as a curiosity was with few exceptions, fine music. than as music.

Jam Carnegie Hall To Hear 'Cootie' Battle Erskine Hawkins

Defender, Chicago, Ill. Sat. 8-31-46

NEW YORK—The two kings of the trumpet, Cootie Williams and Erskine Hawkins, got together on the stage of Carnegie Hall last Saturday night for a jam session that will never be forgotten in the annals of jazz. The maestros met on the stage of this hall of music to pay tribute to the amateur swingsters of the nation unearthed by an amateur jazz band contest. This contest was conducted by a magazine in an effort to find the outstanding instrumentalists among the young swingsters of America and give them the chance to crack into the tough field of professional music.

Every band leader who was in and around the city of New York turned out for the event. Among those present were Guy Lombardo, Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Lionel Hampton, Woody Herman, Louis Armstrong and Jimmy Dorsey. It is interesting to note that among the nine band leaders present five were Negroes. Frank Sinatra, one of the hardest workers for tolerance in show business, also attended the event and presented a special trophy to the winners.

The event played to a jam packed audience that crowded the capacity of Carnegie Hall. All the proceeds from the sale of tickets were donated to the Boys' Club of New York.

At the close of the ceremonies Mrs. Florence Hawkins, wife of Erskine Hawkins, and Mrs. Catherine Williams, wife of Cootie Williams, presented a beautiful gold statuette to the officials of Look Magazine to present in the names of Cootie Williams and Erskine Hawkins to the two outstanding trumpeters unearthed by this contest.

S. I. Hayakawa

Defender Chicago, Ill.

Asleep Behind The Piano

BACK IN 1911 there used to be a little tonk at Perdido and Franklin st. in New Orleans called Dago Tony's, and late at night when the musicians weren't there, there would be a small eleven-year-old problem child sleeping on the floor of the music-stand behind the piano, waiting for the cornet-player to return from his dance - hall jobs and take up playing the blues again.

Sat. 8-31-46

The little problem child was Louis Armstrong, and the cornet - player, at that time the best in New Orleans, was Willie G. "Bunk" Johnson. As Bunk tells it, when he returned to tonk, he would never bother to awaken Louis; he would just start playing, and Louis would be awake, begging to hear his favorite blues numbers and begging to be taught how to play them.

Bunk Johnson, who began as a self-taught musician, was born in 1879. His musical career had started as early as 1894 when, with his mother's permission, he had joined Adam Olivier's band. At that time Buddy "King" Bolden was undisputedly the greatest cornetist in town, and Bunk spent his most important formative years from his teens to maturity as second cornetist in the Bolden Band. Bolden's style was loud, high, individual and untrammeled. Bunk was an excellent improvisor of second cornet parts, but more importantly, he had a knack for holding an orchestra together and pulling the men along with him. By the time Buddy went mad in 1907 (he was placed in an institution), Bunk had learned all a man needed to know about a cornet. And that was part of what he passed on to Louis.

The Heritage Of Jazz

AND WHAT Louis passed on to the rest of the world is part of the glory of Chicago in the days of the Vendome Theater. You'll find it all written down in the histories. So it is more than a matter of casual interest to Chicagoans that on Sept. 6, Bunk Johnson, one of the founders of the great tradition, is finally to be heard in Chicago — a city where his influence has been felt for decades, but where, to my knowledge, he has never been heard before. The concert of Bunk Johnson's New Orleans Band at Orchestra Hall on that date is an event not to be missed even if you have to break out of jail to get to it.

From 1917 on, New Orleans ceased to be the heaven of jazz musicians. For a decade and a half after that date, Johnson led an itinerant musician's life, travelling with shows and circuses, often being stranded, often forced to resort to other jobs to keep going. In the '30s, having lost both his cornet and his teeth, he retired to New Iberia, La., and gave up music.

The Return Of Bunk Johnson

AND I suppose he would have been forgotten for good, except for the fact that Louis Armstrong remembered, and told William Russell, who was writing on the history of jazz, "Bunk —that's the man you ought to write about." The rest of the story is familiar, I suppose, since it has been told in Time, Collier's, Vogue, and a half a dozen other magazines. Russell and his jazz enthusiast friends procured for Bunk Johnson a new set of teeth and a new cornet and dragged him away from his job of hauling sugar cane in the fields near New Iberia. In 1943 they had him playing at jazz concerts at the Museum of Art in San Francisco. In 1945 he was on the Esquire All-American Jazz Concert, and went on to the Stuyvesant Casino in New York.

This year Victor put out an album of Bunk Johnson records (Hot Jazz Series, Vol. VII), including most of the pieces for which the New Orleans small orchestra style is famous: "High Society" (with George Lewis on the difficult clarinet part); "When the Saints Go Marching In" (with Jim Robinson's trombone); the great King Oliver blues, "Snag It"; and Bunk's own amazing lead in "Darktown Strutters' Ball."

Time Chicago, Ill. Mus. 12-23-46

KENTON, CHRISTY & COLE

With people's ears in tune, no more eggs.

MUSIC

"Sincere Sounds" Time Chicago, Ill.

The big brassy jazz bands had become a luxury that people were unwilling to pay for. In empty nightclubs and ballrooms their tricky arrangements were being heard mostly by the waiters, who were appreciative but unprofitable listeners. In the past eight weeks, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, Les Brown and Jack Teagarden decided to disband. Gene Krupa and Jimmy Dorsey cut sal aries. This week Woody Herman gave up too.

The "Herman herd" came to a stop just one year after it won the 1945 band-of-the-year poll by the jazz magazine *Metronome*. Last week *Metronome* counted up its 1946 votes and awarded its prize to a band still new to the big time: Stan Kenton's. He finished far ahead of Duke Ellington. Stan Kenton is a toothy, tall (6 ft. 4½ in.) piano player who likes to talk about the "sincere sounds" his band has to b makes. He had found that there were still plenty of jobs for young bands which were not fussy about one-night stands and didn't charge too much.

No More Eggs. Kenton organized his band five years ago in Hollywood, and rode along in the brassy wakes of Woody Herman and Lionel Hampton. Said he: "We can't lay any more eggs. Now we play a pulsating melodic throb. People's ears today are in tune to great harmonic things. Our music has to be built into institutional proportions. The band has to become a household word."

Kenton predecessor, Anita O'Day. Says she: "I've been hoarse ever since I can remember and Anita has too. Anita has bad breath control and so do I. It makes both of us sing a little flat."

Best small band: the King Cole Trio, which nine years ago was playing California cocktail bars for $25 a week apiece. Now, largely because of the casual singing of Nat (King) Cole, son of a Negro Baptist minister, the trio earns $5,000 a week, for such songs as *Straighten Up and Fly Right* ("Cool down, papa, don't you blow your top") and *Get Your Kicks on Route 66.*

Zinn Arthu

Mus. 12-23-46

. . . .

Metronome's prize girl singer of the year is June Christy, 21, a onetime amateur-night winner from Decatur, Ill. She got more votes than Dinah Shore or Jo Stafford. June sings with Stan Kenton's band in the same husky moan as her

Franziska Boas, right foreground, directing members of her evening dance group in the process of working out a new presentation. Most of these people work at prosaic daytime jobs.

We visit a night school for dancers

p.m.

FRANZISKA BOAS's dance studio occupies the second floor of a three-story, red-brick building on West 21st Street that once was one of Chelsea's stable. A class was in session when we visited there the other evening, and we joined a group of barefooted girls in black, ankle-length tights sitting on cane-bottomed chairs in a corner.

Six girls were dancing on the floor as Miss Boas beat a rhythm for them with a padded stick on a barrel-shaped drum. Miss Boas was barefooted, too, and over her black practice tights she wore a faded blue, turtleneck sweater secured at the waist with an orange sash. As the girls on the floor leaped and turned, her voice rose over the beat of the drum in a continuous flow of instruction and criticism.

Soon the drum beats stopped and the dancers paused. "I hope the time won't be too fast but let's see if we can do the whole thing through now," Miss Boas said.

"But, Franziska, we didn't do the whole thing before," complained one girl from the floor "I don't know how to get over in the corner."

"Oh, you just dance over to Mary O'Connell and she throws you over her shoulder," Miss Boas explained.

We learned later that the girl who hadn't known how to get to the corner was Francoise Sullivan, who works during the day making papier-maché masks for a display company. Mary O'Connell is a physical education student at Teachers College. Both are blondes, Mary tall and slender, Francoise baby-faced and more rounded. Two of the girls on the floor were Negroes. In a smaller room off the main dance floor three young men in gym suits were practicing. One of the boys was a Negro. All members of the group appeared to be in their early twenties.

The beat of the drum began again. "Now, one, two, three, four, turn in, turn out, turn in . . . now, six, two, three, four, seven, two, three, four . . . . ."

The dancers faltered and stopped. "I guess the count does get a bit peculiar at this point," Miss Boas remarked.

Mary O'Connell gave her version of what the count should be and was patiently corrected. But it was getting late, and so the rehearsal of the full dance was put off to the next evening.

Everybody trooped out to the shower. Miss Boas soon reappeared, wearing a striped, gray flannel suit. She did not wear a hat and her lean, intense face was free from thinking there is just the ballet and the modern dance. People dance all over the world and it is all a part of us because the people are people and the primitive dance is not so primitive and is in us.

"I don't influence them with formal patterns. Just as you would give a kid paint and paper and say, *Paint, paint anything* you like, I give them controls and technique and say, *Here is your body, and you. Move!*"

No time, no money

During the day Miss Boas conducts classes in creative dancing, and in the evening of just a kid paint ing a newly formed group meets at her studio. It is a non-profit making organization called the Boas Dance Company, a group of just and is 43. We asked how her group differed from other dance groups.

"I try to make them stop thinking of performing at a recital and to concentrate on the dance itself," she said. "I mean, free them *you like*, I give them controls and technique

name she does not like. There is a dollar fee a year, and membership is open to anyone interested in the dance or allied arts. 1-20-46

"The people in the group want to be professional about their work—want to be—but most don't have either the time or money. That is, money to live so that they can devote themselves to this. They all work or attend school. One works in a wholesale meat market and another in a beauty parlor. Betty Peters, the pretty Negro girl you saw tonight, is a student at NYU, and Lei Smith, the Negro girl from Hawaii, attends the New York School of Social Work. Lei has only been here a few months and is still adjusting herself to the race prejudice in New York City."

We had finished our coffee. Miss Boas was preoccupied, carefully peeling the tax stamp from a pack of Old Gold cigarets.

"Sometimes at the studio a new dancer is uncertain about the mixed nature of the group," she went on," but their uncertainty always vanishes quickly in the common effort of their work. Father once said to me, 'You can do something about this because you are in the arts, where everybody is recognized for what he can do. Merely bringing people together socially is usually too artificial.'" 1-20-46

We learned that Professor Boas, who died three years ago at the age of 84, had come to the United States by accident in the 1890s. He had gone to Baffin's Land to make a geographic survey for the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and when his assignment was completed, the only boat leaving Baffin's Land that year was headed for New York (where he met and married Marie Krackowitzer). Until 1907, the Boas family lived on West 82d Street, then they moved to Grantwood, N. J. Prof. Boas often made trips out West and to British Columbia and Mexico to study Indian life. He usually brought an Indian home with him to help interpret his notes.

Indians in the house

"I guess people in Grantwood thought us sort of odd because of the Indians we had living with us," Miss Boas said. "We were kids then, and it was nice to have an Indian to teach us bird calls and how to stealthily stalk around Grantwood. The Indians were all fascinated by the big city, though, and would spend hours in Times Square, just standing there and watching the crowds. Once, long ago, father arranged to meet a Kwakiutl Indian named Joe at a midtown restaurant. Joe arrived naked from the waist up except for the jacket to the suit with which father had outfitted him. Well, father thought he would chance it and sat down at a table with Joe, but the proprietor came over and protested. Joe's injured dignity was soothed by reminding him of the many taboos observed by his own Kwakiutl people. Joe accepted the New York taboo against sitting in a restaurant without a shirt and went home to put one on."

When Heywood Popularized "Begin the Beguine," Few Knew He Was Colored

Afro American Baltimore, Md. Sat 2-23-46

By E. B. REA

BALTIMORE—When Cole Porter's immortal composition, "Begin the Beguine," first soared to popularity, few people knew that the arranger was colored.

The tune, made famous by Eddie Heywood Jr., also made its arranger famous, for in the past four years, Eddie has ascended to the top among the nation's great pianists, arrangers and small bandleaders.

Eddie, born in Atlanta, Ga., 30 years ago, has been playing the piano since he was eight. He led an orchestra at the age of 14 in his native home. He first played classical music, then took up jazz.

Taught by Father

While Eddie is only a graduate of the Booker T. Washington High School, Atlanta, he received his training from his late father, a graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music, who taught him both theory and harmony, which he has mastered.

Eddie Sr., was one of the outstanding arrangers of his day. At one time he did the musical score for the famous Whitman Sisters, Ethel Waters, Butterbeans and Susie, and all of the old-timers on the old TOBA circuit.

He also arranged a number of tunes for Tom Delaney, veteran Baltimore composer, who first introduced Eddie Sr.'s name on public arrangements in the east on the still popular tune "Jazz Me Blues," and "Old Time Slow Drag," and "Tantalizing Melody," which was never published.

Get Stamp of Approval

Baltimoreans heard Eddie Jr. for the first time here last week at the Royal Theatre, and its critical audiences immediately put the stamp of approval on him. It was his first performance since leaving the coast en route to New York's Apollo Theatre, where he is currently playing.

He left New York in January, 1945, for a four weeks engagement at Shepp's Playhouse, Los Angeles. He stayed on the coast a year. It was the first band to play the Orpheum Theatre and be called back within four weeks.

Between nightery dates, Eddie and his seven-piece band completed a specialty number, "Loch Lomond," for Monogram's "High School Kids;" enacted a 52nd Street sequence in 20th Century-Fox's "The Dark Corner," starring Lucille Ball, and "That Little Dream Got Nowhere" for Paramount in a Betty Hutton film.

Recorded with Crosby

He also made three recordings of six sides with Bing Crosby for Decca: "That Little Dream Got Nowhere," "I Found a New Baby," "Baby Won't You Please Come Home," "Who's Sorry Now," "Save Your Sorrow," and "Everybody Loves My Baby," as well as composing "Heywood's Blues," "The More I See You."

EDDIE HEYWOOD

Also on the Decca label he has such tunes as "The Man I Love," "Sunny Side of the Street," "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone," "Lover Man," "Begin the Beguine," which is now available, and "Loch Lomond."

Eddie's band is the offspring of a trio he carried into New York's Village Vanguard. It has two of its original members, Victor Dickinson, Zenia, Ohio, first trombone, and William (Keg) Purnell, Charleston, W. Va., drummer.

Other Members of Band

Other members are: Henry Jones, Baltimorean, trumpet; Henry Coker, 2nd trombone; Marshall Royal, formerly of Lionel Hampton's band, alto sax and clarinet, and Ernest Sheppard, bass.

Other than his father, he's the only other member of his family musically inclined. He has a brother, Archie, a member of the Merchant Marine; three sisters, Margaret, Lottie and Beulah, all residing with his mother, Mrs. Susie Heywood, in Atlanta.

Eddie's combo, which he directs from the piano, rated third to King Cole Trio and Louis Jordan's Tympany Five in the 1945 Down Beat band poll.

It outranked small instrumental aggregations such as John Kirby, Phil Moore, Red Allen, Art Tatum, Dizzy Gillespie, Honeydrippers, Slam Stewart, Ben Webster and Art Hodes, which Eddie more than holds his own with any of the present-day pianists, solo or with band.

It wouldn't be surprising to see Eddie Heywood, master pianist and arranger, and his outfit rise and be the talk of the music world at the end of 1946.

Charges Bias in Promotion Field

Afro American Baltimore, Md.

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Charges that local white promoters and New York booking agencies have formed a monoply to keep colored promoters out of the booking business were made public here last week by Edson E. Blackman Jr.

In a form letter sent to the many weekly newspapers throughout the country, the writer cities the unavailing efforts of colored to secure the services of name bands as a "type of racial discrimination" and that "pressure should be brought on the booking agencies in New York and on the band leaders." Sat 4-11-46

Mr. Blackman cites figures that Charlotte has a colored population of 40,000, and a $2,000 to $3,000 a night business, but that they "have no hand in the promotion field except as flunkies, because the booking agencies won't book a good band to anyone except a certain non-colored promoter here."

He related instances where he and others had been given the "run-around" by certain agents, who later booked the same band they sought through another channel.

HUDDIE LEADBETTER HEARD IN FOLKSONGS

New York Times Mon 4-29-46

Huddie (Leadbelly) Leadbetter, assisted by Sanders (Sonny) Terry, harmonica player, gave a recital of American folksongs late yesterday afternoon at Town Hall.

The songs were heard without any sophistication, with no other art than that with which the singer was born and without the benefit of a beautiful voice like Paul Robeson's or Marian Anderson's. The listener heard, instead, precisely what is to be heard today in the hills of the Carolinas, the swamp lands of Mississippi and Louisiana, the small-town theatres and "hot spots" throughout the South. This is the music of the soil, direct from its source, and as Leadbelly sings it, it is filled with an emotion all its own, and is the outpouring of an art that is the simple and genuine expression of that emotion.

The program listed "hollers," Spirituals, Blues, railroad songs and work songs, including such classics as "John Henry" and "Rock Island Line," ballads and play songs. Leadbelly, about whose singing of Negro folksongs at least one book has been written, and who has been called "King of the twelve-string guitar," effectively accompanies himself on that instrument. Mon 4-29-46

Sonny Terry, as Leadbelly remarked, "can't see, but he can feel—he can feel that harmonica." His art, like that of Leadbelly, is the simple, natural "art of the people." Much of his effect he gets by "fancy" movements all around his instrument with his hands, and much by strange sounds with his voice, to which the harmonica responds. But it is all compounded of the basic elements of art.

The audience accepted frequent invitations to "join in," as in the closing number "We' in the Same Boat Brother." R. L.

Alberta Hunter Is Given Asiatic Award

NEW YORK, N. Y.—In recognition of her outstanding service to humanity in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations, Alberta Hunter, distinguished American singer, has been awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Ribbon by Lt. Gen. Wheeler, commanding general of that war theater. The award was made to Miss Hunter and 40 other American artists upon the official order issued by command of Maj. Gen. Terry and signed by Vernan Evans.

Graphic House

Performers in the variety show, "Tidbits of 1946," which enters the Plymouth Theatre tomorrow. Left, Carmen, Rolando and Candido, the Bongo Boy, in one of their Latin numbers; upper right, Muriel Gaines, vocalist, and, below, Joey Faye in a skit with Josephine Boyer.

Times New York, N.Y. Sun. 7/7/46

Buddy Johnson Reveals Hard Work Led To Band Success

The Journal and Guide Norfolk, Va. Sat. 6-22-46

BY A. M. MORISEY

GREENSBORO, N. C.—The phenomenal success story of reaching the top from fifty cents a night playing for house parties in Darlington, S. C., was told here last week by Buddy Johnson while in the city for an engagement with his "Walk 'Em Rhythm" orchestra.

The interesting account was revealed during his visit with another native of Darlington, Mrs. Edith King, during which time the two recalled the leader's boyhood days in the South Carolina city when he was, even then, generally recognized as having amazing musical talent and was eagerly soughting by the young set to preside at the piano.

PREPS FOR CAREER

Arriving in New York to seek his fortune Johnson was promptly introduced to serious piano studies which he followed diligently for three years readying himself for his future exploits in the band business. Coerced into a bit of music for his small enthusiastic audience of admirers, Johnson's nimble piano interpretations and variations of familiar musical theme, including some of the classics, revealed the success of his preparations for his career fronting a band.

A serious student of human nature he talked intelligently of the techniques, or tricks of the trade, if you prefer, used by musicians to please their many audiences He pointed to the difference in playing a public dance, such as the one here, as compared with a privit affair attended by invitation.

PROVES POPULAR

He admitted that his music is designed particularly for the younger groups, sometimes called the jitterbugs, consequently limiting his appeal to the more reserved dancers and serious students of music. Sat. 6-22-46

A popular favorite here, Johnson's band received wild and enthusiastic approval much of which was directed to the home-town boy, Arthur Prysock, male vocalist for the group.

A sister of the director, Miss Ella Johnson, is female vocalist but was not with the band here because of illness.

"Stop Pretending," was the first composition to prove successful and go over big on records. Then came such familiar tunes as "Please Mr. Johnson," "Baby Don't You Cry," "They All Say I'm The Biggest Fool," "Southern Echoes," and "I Ain't Mad With You."

Mixed Dance Team Is Broadway's Latest

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-12-46

NEW YORK — (ANP) — The Negro and white performers to mixed singing and dancing team of team up in big time, Dorothy Jarnac and Foye, currently old-nac, white interpretative dancer, ing forth at Cafe Society Uptown, ored partner, Hope Foye, and both is receiving race notices from fans are "so terribly thrilled" at the and critics. Representing the first success of their act.

According to Dot, "Even our most reactionary friends have been converted by our team. We're so much better working together than we were alone."

"Besides," Hope added, "we're making money now. And nobodytor and ever has a good argument against success."

Hope once sang at Cafe Society Downtown and Village Vanguard, and met Dorothy, who recently appeared as Daisy in "Bloomer Girl," through Cafe Society owner, Barney Joseph-son.

The two girls met at Hope's home to practice their act. Hope's husband, Kelly Wooley, leader of a Negro veterans' group in the Bronx, and Martin Deutch, sculptor and painter husband of Dorothy, act as critics while the girls practice perfection of their teamwork.

The success of the team is viewed by Hope as a means of breaking down barriers for other mixed teams. "I just got married," Hope said, "But Negroes sometimes worry about bringing new children into the world. We wonder if our children will be given a chance. Maybe our team will break down a few more bars, and then my kids will get by better."

"Sometimes in the past," Dorothy added, "I've been so ashamed of my race for the way some treat Negroes. But our act. Well, it's more fun even than sticking my tongue out at Bilbo."

Why I Moved to London

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md

How America's Peculiar Brand of Democracy Forced a Brooklyn Girl to Live in Europe

Sat. 7-13-46

ADELAIDE HALL,

Brooklyn-born singer, now the toast of London, who tells why she moved to Europe in the accompanying article by AFRO correspondent Douglass Hall.

By DOUGLASS HALL

[Special to the AFRO]

Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

LONDON.—Brooklyn-born Adelaide Hall, top singer and entertainer on the Continent, was assisting with household chores, when I called upon her recently.

She met me at the door with a welcome handshake and showed me to a guest room, tastefully furnished and typical of the other rooms in her home, which is located in an exclusive section of town where she lives with her manager-husband.

What I wanted to know was why Adelaide Hall who made quite a name and money for herself in the States left her home to come here.

Why She Left Home

The reason was double, she told me.

There were several persons who insisted upon "prostituting her talents." She was making plenty money . . . for the other man. And then she could not live where she wanted to, not even in New York.

There was always a "special place." Money, talent and achievement could not break that. So she left. Sat. 7-13-46

The housing situation more than anything else drove her from America. God knows she loved that country but she loved freedom better.

Longs for States — But

And she often longs for the States. After many years of success over here, she has an inward burning for the old USA.

But when she sits down and visions the limitations placed upon colored persons of talent, how they are hammered down and browbeaten, she cannot come back . . . to live.

She cannot again imprison her songs. She cannot again go to the colored section of town because she is not allowed in the white section.

The N.Y. "Incident"

That's it. She was trying to improve her standard of living when she began purchasing a home in Westchester County in New York. She sank $2,000 as down payment and moved in. It was opposite the home of Joyce Kilmer, who wrote "Trees."

It was then that she felt the pressure. She was asked point-blank to move out, because colored persons were not wanted there.

It hurt her and she was willing to go back to Brooklyn and forget it all. But hundreds of letters began pouring in from all over America imploring her to stick it out.

The Showdown Came

At last the showdown came. She could get no bookings. The pressure had come to the booking office and on one cool September morning she was forced to give in and move out.

She didn't hate the America that drove her back to the slums. She felt sorry for it. She went to Paris. After a short run there, she finally moved over the channel here.

London Catches On

After a while, London folks began to catch on. She was a hit. Today Adelaide Hall is an institution in England. Her name is a password to success, her story an inspiration to all.

She threw off the shackles of segregation and crowned herself with success.

SISTER ROSETTA THARPE THRILLS KANSAS CITY

The Plaindealer

Kansas City, Kansas Fri. 8-23-41

In an unusual repertoire of spiritual songs, that touched all the cords of human emotion, silvery voiced, sister Rossetta Tharp, and her protege Madam Marie Knight, captivated the hearts of Kansas Citizens, Monday night, in a two hour concert in Memorial Hall.

From the Amen's and other expressions of spiritual manifestations, that came from the audience, it was evident that there were a large group of churchmen present. While sister Rossetta, was singing in that incomparable style of hers, "When I Move To The Skies." A voice rang out clear and high pitched, "Well My Soul Is Happy Tonight."

Madam Marie Knight was great with her songs, sung in a manner that is hard to equal. Her "Someday" Precious Lord, and Lord you know my heart was superbly done. Sister Rossetta and Madam Knight, drew a tremendous ovation from the audience when they sung together, "How About You," in a manner that held the listeners spell bound. She is without a doubt in a class by herself, in her field of music, and has been acknowledged one of the world's greatest masters of the guitar.

Sister Rossetta, was the first woman, to sing in Carnegie Hall, and when she did, sang four consecutive times. She is a Decca Recording artist, and has appeared in such name places as the "Paramount" on New York City's famous Broadway. She broke all records at the "Cotton Club," when a contract that called for two weeks, lengthened into twenty-two weeks. Her show at the Zanzibar Cafe, in New York City, ran into twelve weeks. She has broadcast over the Mutual Networks, and played to the Million Dollar House for ten weeks, who before her appearance there, never let a colored artist perform. The famous singer has been singing since she was six years old, but it was in St. Louis, Mo., when she sang for a white Convention, the song, "Pressing On The Upward Way" that really made her. Fri. 8-23-46

From there she went to Harlem, where music lovers went wild over her. The talented singer's mother, Mrs. Katie Bell, was a concert sing-in Winston Salem, North Carolina, er, and the two broke all records, to hear her sing.

when they put on what they called Traveling with Sister Rossetta a duel of music in Mason Temple, is her husband and manager, Foch Memphis, Tennessee. The Temple P. Allen. They own the first Con- seats 8,000 people and its was cert Agency, ever owned and ope- packed to capacity. The singers rated by Negroes. The Allen sang there for twenty nights. She Artist Bureau, on Lenox Avenue, also broke the record for stellar New York City. They will give any attraction in Chicago, and Atlanta, one with talent a chance, if con- 10,000 people jammed a warehouse tacted. James G. Austin, a pro-

fessor at Columbia University is executive Secretary, Malcom and Randall Allen, are Road Representatives. Sister Rossetta would like for her Kansas City audience to know, that she was almost ill on Monday night, and consequently feels that she did not do her very best. The entertainers were brought to the city by the West End Development Association of which James Brown is President.

66c 1946 General

GREAT THEATRICAL STARS

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 8-10-46

This is the first in a series of two articles about four well-known stars born in Richmond, Va. Coming are some hidden facts on Eddie Leonard

By ALVIN E. WHITE

RUBY HILL

Richmond is proud of her many sons and daughters who have gone forth and achieved the high spots in their careers. Especially proud is the old city of four of her favorites who achieved greatness in the field of entertainment.

Latest to bring glory to the old town is RUBY HILL, the youngster who sang her way to the top after a long struggle to prove her ability.

Everybody knows the story of BILL (BOJANGLES) ROBINSON, who has been "Tops in Taps."

But few ever heard of his sidekick, who started out with him in the early days as his "eef-man."

Now an "eef man' was the guy who made the funny noises with his mouth furnishing the rhythm for the dancer. He antedated hand-clapping which later came into popularity.

Yep, according to the old timers, Bo had his own personal "eef-man." And they did right well together until the "eef-man" wanted the same top billing as the dancer.

Even after they separated, Bill and his "eef-man," who now lives in Washington and is a familiar character up and down Y Street, remained friends.

The Concert Singer

Nowadays, or rather when Bill used to play the Palace in New York, he used to give his own interpretations of "eefing"—setting the fast rhythmic pace with the funny sounds from the corner of his mouth. He also got the same effect, using his cane in imitation of a man playing a trombone while dancing.

ADDIE JOHNSON was different. She was one of the first concert singers to go out of Richmond. As a member of an early troupe of singers, she toured the world.

On her departure from Richmond to marry the manager of her company, she gave a farewell concert in the basement of the old First Baptist Church, which was long remembered. As the beautiful songstress sang her farewell, there was not a dry eye in the house.

A massive ebony Wendell and Marshall piano used for the concert was purchased by an admiring relative and stood in his parlor for many years.

Miss Johnson was married to a Mr. Sharpe in Washington, D.C., at the home of Mrs. Ferguson, widow of a Richmond pharmacist, who then lived in the capital.

She died in July, 1918, in London where she had lived happily for many years.

St. Louis Woman

And now gorgeous Ruby Hill who used to appear in amateur productions around Richmond. When she went to New York she had various bits until she was selected to play the lead in "St. Louis Woman." After some mix-up in which she was replaced, Ruby was recalled and went on to make a hit in the show.

When it closed, she was promptly engaged for the Ruban Blue, an exclusive night club. Ruby was under the management of Al Siegel, and at one time he had her under contract to pay her $5000 a year. Now she rates much better. Of her opening in the night club, one of New York's critics said in a daily:

"Al Siegel has another sure fire hit in Ruby Hill, attractive talented sepian warbler, Ruby was the Cinderella girl who played the name role in St. Louis Woman. With Le Ruban Bleu's Tony Miele interested in her Siegel prepared a lot swell special material for his protege, with the result she is a smash.

"Ruby has a powerful voice, with a peculiar haunting quality, and on looks she puts Lena Horne in the shade. Siegel performed a miracle with this unknown from Virginia.

Ruby may be an unknown from Virginia, but Richmond knows her and is proud of her as its contribution to a glorious list of theatrical folk.

RECORD NOTES

Daily Worker New York, N.Y. Mon. 10-7-46

OAKLAND.—The songs of Bessie Smith, greatest of all blues singers, are back on the music store shelves. And they come back at a fairly reasonable price, a phenomenon almost as amazing as the voice of this inspired vocalist.

Before World War II, Columbia issued albums of four Bessie Smith records, all reissues of recordings made in the 20s. These albums were immediately gobbled up by jazz collectors, who believe almost unanimously that Bessie is the greatest folk singer in our history.

Bessie started singing professionally when she was 12 years old, down in Chattanooga, Tenn. She was sponsored by another vocal genius, Ma Rainey, the pioneer of blues singers. Bessie first sang in tent shows, then came north before World War I, making a big hit and quite a lot of money.

In the middle 20s Bessie was earning $200 a week and people down South were lining up for blocks to buy her records. But the "sophisticated" torch singers and the lukewarm crooners came along. Bessie was no longer a hit attraction. She died in 1937, after an auto accident.

This album is a small slice of the hundreds of great records Bessie made. It gives the powerful, rich and resonant voice of an artist who sang with sincerity and feeling. It is really something to hear, in this day of marshmallow and prunewhip vocalizing.

Most of these numbers deal with that rather popular subject, a woman's desire for physical, mental and emoticnal communion with a man. The titles are indicative: **Young Woman's Blues, Baby Doll, Empty Bed Blues, Cold in Hand Blues,** and **Lost Your Head Blues.**

But Bessie is versatile and she proves it in two departures from the main theme. The first of these is a satiric allegory called **You've Been a Good Ole Wagon.**

The other, one of the finest bits in the set, is a gay and festive thing called **Cake Walkin' Babies.** This song, incidentally, is supported by one of the most exciting choruses ever played by a jazz band.

Bessie was usually accompanied by the finest jazz musicians and her voice seems to push them up to their greatest performances.

Here she sings with groups that include Louis Armstrong's unbeaten cornet, Joe Smith's sensitive trumpet, Charlie Green's lusty trombone and Buster Bailey's sprightly clarinet. —LAWHON MILFORD.

Great Theatrical Stars

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 8-17-46

This is the second and last in a series of articles on stage stars from Richmond, Va., whose names shine or did shine in Broadway lights

One of the earliest stars Richmond sent to the big time was EDDIE LEONARD, the great minstrel man, whose song, "Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider" is known to millions of theater goers.

He came from the Richmond area, or at least spent his early years in that city.

His sisters, half brothers and half sisters (his mother was married four times and had four different sets of children) originally came from Charlottesville, but they all lived in Richmond at one time or another.

Introduced Tap

Eddie died in New York not oo many years ago, after a career hich took him from the banks of James to the Court of St. nes, winning top billings in the t vaudeville theaters of the untry.

As a lad, he ran away from ome to join the famous old Billy Kersand minstrels. He had a sweet voice and used it to advantage.

Eddie also introduced "Soft-shoe" dancing, which was in marked contrast to the noisy clog and buck and winging so popular in his day. It wasn't called tap dancing then.

On stage, at the Palace, where he was a genuine favorite, Eddie would dance backwards, weaving deftly, waving his arms gracefully in a half bow while his massed group of banjoists plunked away at "Ida" his theme song.

30 Banjoists

On one occasion Eddie had thirty banjoists in his ensemble, all dressed in resplendent satin suits on his entry, the pit orchestra would strike up the theme song and as he finished up his song and dance act, he would reverse his entry as the banjoist played the tune and it was picked up by the orchestra.

His costumes were gorgeous purple satin affairs with exaggerated white lapes and bell bottom pants. His hat matched but was encircled with a glittering band of brilliants.

His face was blacked up, but without the ludicrous white around the eyes and lips that others used. Eddie was a handsome chap who stepped over the color line to win fame and fortune.

Often in his hey-dey when he played the big time circuits, he would visit with his sister who lived in Harlem. He was one of the greatest minstrels.

PLATTER CHATTER

By Eddie Miller

Brunswick Ga Georgian Aug. 30 1946

The questions: What is New Orleans style? What is Chicago style?—and who are some of the leading exponents, have been asked by many.

New Orleans style goes fo
e years passed, Armstrong sound chord improvising, short o
d his tone and technique. long phrasing, very little melody
improvisions thrilled both and plenty of accent on rhythm.
ro and the White musi- Chicago style appeared when
like. The same 'Orleans the white musicians of that city
ame tabbed the Armstrong used and practiced the character-
Both names link the hot tle Negroid style. These white
player as the outstand-
ciated with this period.

...kers, who began sound-ing off with lip slurs, chromatic take offs, and bear growls were looked upon as fools or fanatics by the "commercial boys".

Undaunted by the quirks and jibes of the social tunesters, the small band of hot white musicians grew to great numbers. That urge for playing as one felt continued. Names of musicians carrying the "Chicago" label are today the leaders of modern swing.

8-30-46

Men like "Muggsy" Spanier, Jimmy MacPartland, Bud Freeman, Joe Sullivan, Jess Stacy, Gene Krupa, Dave Tuft, George Wettling, Peewee Russell, Milton Mesirow, Jack Teagarden, Fud Livingston, and Benny Goodman, are some of the better known representatives of the Chicago style.

The Windy City hot solos are composed of fewer notes, more hot licks, shorter phrasing, ingenious melodic patterns and precision. Today, few remain who continue to carry out these styles. Much has been added to or taken away, giving the performer his personal ad libs.

Rated Among Nation's Best

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md.

Sat. 8-17-46

In a recent exhaustive article called "Hot Trumpets," LOOK magazine tabbed the above horn blowers as the "greatest in the contemporary field." Six of the nine selected are colored. Top photo, left to right: Roy Eldridge, Pittsburgh-born; Cootie Williams, Mobile, Ala.; Louis Armstrong, New Orleans. Bottom: Dizzy Gillespie, Philadelphia, and Bunk Johnson, 66-year-old veteran of New Orleans. Rex Stewart, another Philadelphian selected, is not shown. They are rated along with Harry James, Pete Candoli and Bobby Hackett

Blind Sonny Terry, A People's Artist

Daily Worker, New York, N.Y.

Mon. 7-22-46

By Marty Martin

Thirty-five years ago, in a sharecropper's shack in Greenburg, Ga., a son was born to the Terrys. They called him Sonny. Today, Sonny Terry, although handicapped by total blindness, is a name in American folk-art.

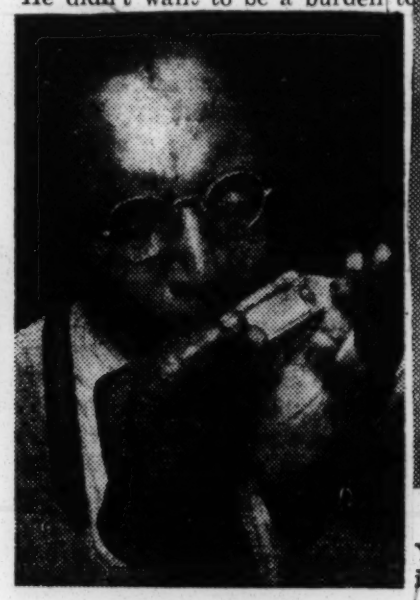
As far back as Sonny can remember, his father played the harmonica. He played a song called **Fox Chase** and a song called **Casey Jones** and others that he heard from the people who "worked around." Mr. Terry Sr. was also born in Greenburg, and so was Sonny's grandfather. The songs they sang and played, Sonny's songs, are as much a part of Georgia as the earth; they are as much a part of America as the people.

When Sonny was 11 years old he hurt his left eye and it became useless. When he was 13, while playing with another boy, he was hit in the right eye with a piece of steel. From that day on Sonny Terry was blind. Sonny started to pay more attention to his harmonica playing. He played at churches, warehouses, in the fields and at parties. With the loss of his eyes his hearing became more acute and he soon was an expert at imitating the sound of a train, a dog's bark and the sounds of life on his harmonica.

When his father was killed by a truck, he set out to see his brother in North Carolina.

With but a quarter in his pocket, no one to help him see his way, he started the 65 mile hike. After walking 15 miles he reached Kane Mountain where he earned a dollar playing to a group around a gas station. The group took him to a cafe and a truck driver offered to take him to Gastonia, 20 miles nearer his destination. At Gastonia he "played about" and made another 40 cents, then he started walking to Charlotte—30 miles away. Such was the life of this American artist.

He didn't want to be a burden to



SONNY TERRY

his brother so he took a job with a man who toured small towns in a truck selling medicine. This didn't suit him and when he met Blind Boy Fuller in Burlington, they teamed up playing in the parks and streets.

In Burlington Sonny was "discovered" by an agent who brought him to New York where he met Leadbelly, Brownie McGhee, and Woody Guthrie. He gave concerts, made movies, records, radio programs and helped the people's struggle by touring the country with progressive organizations.

Sonny is now a member of People's Artists playing to save OPA, to win the peace, to bring White and Negroes together. With People's Artists, a progressive entertainers organization whose mission is to provide progressive entertainment, Sonny Terry has entered a rich new phase of his interesting life and art.

DORSEY'S STAR

The Defender

Chicago, Ill. Sat. 11-2-46

WILLIE PRATT

Youthful song and dance artist who is currently on tour with Tommy Dorsey, is attracting raves from critics all over. Pratt appears at the Civic Opera House Sunday when Tommy Dorsey plays his annual concert engagement here.

Mamie Smith, Famous Blues Chirper, Dies

The Afro-American

Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Mamie Smith, first artist to record the blues, died here Wednesday at Harlem Hospital, following a long illness. Interment took place Saturday in the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital in Long Island. Sat. 11-2-46

Concert to Be Based on Mezzrow Book

New York, N.Y.

As if to prove that the stage and the movies are not the only media to which books can be adapted, jazz clarinetist Milton "Mezz" Mezzrow's autobiography, *Really the Blues*, will be turned into a concert bearing the same title by the Friends of Jazz at Town Hall on Wednesday evening, Jan. 1. Musical episodes from the book will be reenacted by some of the performers mentioned in them with Mezzrow acting as narrator. Among the veteran musicians scheduled to appear are Sidney Bechet, Muggsy Spanier, Hot Lips Page, Sammy Price, Baby Dodds, Freddie Moore, Pops Foster and Sandy Williams. Impersonating the famous Chicago "Austin High School Gang" will be the "Scarsdale High School Gang," a unit of jazz musicians all under 21. Thurs. 12-19-46

Friends of Jazz is a recently formed group of record collectors who hope to present "more authentic hot jazz concerts than those offered in recent years in New York and elsewhere." *Really the Blues* is their first venture. According to Bernard Katz, one of the founders of the group, any profits will be devoted to "jazz in its purest form" through scholarships, commissions to composers for special works and concerts.

66c 1946 General

The Dancing Twins

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

A four-part real life story of a team that danced itself around the world only finally to become a war casualty

Sat. 10-26-46

(66c) Gen.

Miss West

By IRENE WEST

CHAPTER I.

At the age of 17, The Twins—the sensational Mackey Twins, arrived in Honolulu as dancers with a band and vaudeville revue, brought to the Islands by me, manager of West's Coast Theatre, who was destined to become mother, tutor and bodyguard of these dancers on world tour. I was on the dock to meet the company arriving from San Francisco. I spotted these shy, tall saplings and wondered how much experience they had had in the theatre. Opening night proved they were veterans of the terpsichorean art despite their age. They must have been born dancing. The Honolulu press went wild with the statement that they were material for the top theatres in the world. The Twins were the most finished tap dancers I had ever seen and I had seen them all. Now, to the story of their life up to their advent in Honolulu as told to me by Sam and Jim Mackey and others of the company who had known them on the Pacific Coast. They were born in Kansas City; sold newspapers on the streets up to the age of nine years, at which time they decided they could dance rings around Sunshine Sammy, whom they had seen in the movies, so decided to go to Hollywood.

Sam Mackey, the more aggressive of the pair, led the way. They made for a service station fartherest from the city in the direction of California.

As the cars stopped for servicing, the boys would inquire if they were going west. If the answer was "Yes, but why?" the boys went into their dance, one playing ukulele while the other danced.

They had won all the Charleston contests in Kansas City. They got the desired lift as far as the driver was going in the right direction.

Too Young for Contracts

This stunt was repeated until they arrived in Los Angeles. They told me how well they were treated by those who gave them rides; how they were fed and twice put up over night, always leaving them with change in their pockets. Imagine, nine year old hitch-hikers!

Arriving in Los Angeles they made friends who took them to Hollywood to dance for directors, who wanted to sign them up. But being minors with no one who could sign the contract, they could not be engaged.

The boys would not tell their identity or where they came from, fearing the police would return them to home and mother.

They next auditioned for the famous Sebastian's Cotton Club. Owner Sebastian, thrilled by their dancing, decided to take a chance. He gave them the name of "The Cotton Club Pics."

Dragged Home

Then the unexpected happened! In Oakland, Calif., a father, seated by a radio, listening to a Cotton Club broadcast, heard The Cotton Club Pics announced.

As soon as he heard the dancing, "My God!" he exclaimed, a sailing! The press took it up that I was taking The Twins to Europe via the Orient and the docks were filled with friends.

Decked out in new togs—smothered in leis, we departed. The Twins were radiant with pride and I was happier than I had been in years. I was their "Mama"—they were my "babies."

Sam and Jim Mackey, dancing twins, ran away from home at the age of nine to start on their career.

Aboard the largest of the Japanese liners—The Twins soon had the run of the ship. Daily I would find them in the gymnasium riding the electric horses or in the swimming pool.

Arriving in Yokohama, friends were on the docks to meet me and to show the new arrivals around Tokyo. That night they took us to a swanky new ballroom where several colored men were playing in the orchestra. The Twins were overjoyed at meeting some of their own race so far from home.

Itching to Dance

These two always dressed exactly alike—tall, slender and well built, and caught the attention of the audience the moment they entered. The Tan Yanks came to our table to meet the boys.

The manager of the establishment asked me if I would permit the boys to give one number. They were itching to dance and I knew it.

Unnoticed by me, they had worn their tap shoes, hoping for just such an occasion, and hit that ballroom floor with gusto and precision, dancing like two mechanical dolls.

One, two, three numbers! to a wildly enthusiastic audience and left those Japanese breathless; the manager with a grin from ear to ear and showing a mouthful of teeth. It was The Twins' first foreign truimph.

The manager made me flattering offers of an engagement, but we had to proceed on our way to Paree. After The Twins' performance the band played dance after dance but few couples took the floor while we remained in the place.

They crowded around our table and just stared while we ate supper and Mama drank champagne on the house.

It was a joyous evening and when we reached the steamer, Sammy said, "Mama, those Japs were a pushover." I learned The Twins' had a habit—the greater their success the more they laughed instead of bragging.

I saw them securely tucked in in their cabin that night. Before daybreak the big steamer sild her berth and steamed for Shanghai. "That must be my sons!"

So, Papa Mackey jumped into his old jalopy and headed for Los Angeles. It was his sons.

I understand there was a settlement out of court and Mackey Sr. took a couple of heartbroken young stars to Oakland and clapped them into school. Their mother in Kansas City was notified of their adventure.

The Twins wanted to dance and they did. By now they were tap dancers. They kept running away from school, so Papa Mackey was induced to accompany them on an engagement in Reno, Nev.

Father Gives In

The boys rioted those luxury loving, pleasure seeking divorcees in the swankiest Night Club in Reno. After 18 months in Reno the father and Twins returned to Oakland.

At this juncture, a show for Honolulu was being organized for me in San Francisco. The Twins bedeviled their father until he signed the contract permitting were mighty sophisticated after that sojourn in Reno and earlier experiences at Sebastian's

They had lived on cream. They were developed mentally far beyond their years and their intelligence amazed me from the moment I got to know them. They were courageous, adventurous and wise as serpents.

I took a mother's interest in The Twins from the start. They heard of young artist I had taken on world tours and began begging me not to send them home when the show returned.

Earned Their Place

So outstanding was their talent, I yielded to their pleading. I decided they had earned a place at the top. Cabling the famous Canidrome Ballroom in Shanghai I received a favorable reply and a contract for The Twins. When I told them it was settled, they them to join the company. They were supremely happy, hugging me and dancing all over the place.

Time came for sailing, and what

The Dancing Twins

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

A real life story of a team that danced itself around the world only finally to become a war casualty

Sat. 11-9-46

Jim and Sam Mackey, age 17, arrived in Honolulu as tap dancers with a band and vaudeville revue brought to the islands by the author, Irene West. She tells how they hitch-hiked from Kansas City to Los Angeles at the age of nine, got a contract at Sebastian's Cotton Club, only to be dragged home by their father. He later took them to Reno and then agreed to let them go to Honolulu with Miss West, and her 17-year-old daughter, Pittsburg millionaires, fell in love with the two, mother choosing Jim and daughter, Sam. A Pittsburgh matron and later in Manila, threats by the police, chased the two away. Before leaving Manila, Miss West added to the show the Dixie Sisters, and two Hawaiians, Duke and George. Then they sailed for Java to torment and thrill the Dutch. Now read on.

SKIRTING INDIA

On the voyage to Java the four boys got into their first fist fight. The sextette were seated together in the dining room. It all started in fun, they told me. Son George began bragging about there were no snakes in Hawaii. The Twins razed George in their own inimicable way. Duke, the strong man of the troupe, kept silent. I first heard loud voices, then chairs upset and dishes crashing; Virginia screamed, "Stop, don't do that!"

Irene West

It was certainly a show for Dutch passengers in the dining salon. I was worried and ashamed.

All Is Forgotten

A steward, under orders from the captain escorted The Twins to their cabin and George and Duke to theirs, locking them in for the night.

We landed next day before noon. When the troupe gathered on deck, George said to The Twins, "Shake, kids, I'm sorry." They shook hands and it was forgotten, which pleased me immensely.

George apologized to me—it was their first and last fight. I warned George and Duke they were never to lay hands on The Twins.

The troupe opened in Soerabayia at the Circle Artistic, most exclusive Dutch Club in Java. Their success was a foregone conclusion.

One week in a picture theater before we departed gave the natives a chance to see the show and marvel at The Twins.

The hotel in that paradise of the tropics had large grounds, the main buildings in the center and guest bungalows forming a semicircle; a fine driveway made this set-up a perfect saucer track for The Twins on their bikes. They had now added bicycles as well as musical instruments to their collection.

Tormenting the Dutch

The Dutch siesta for two hours after luncheon required that the place be kept as quiet as a cemetery. I could not use my typewriter on the veranda during that period. Nurses took all babies to the park.

The Twins slept until noon, and after luncheon were rearing to go. On their bikes, bells ringing, they would chase each other around this circle.

Dutchmen would jump out of nearly every bungalow, clad in pajamas, shaking their fists at The Twins as they sped by—cursing them in a language we couldn't understand.

When the boys had the Dutchmen good and mad, they would ride off down the street roaring with laughter.

One night after the show they took a long ride on their bikes into the countryside and returning before daybreak in a tropical storm ran into a small vegetable wagon, upsetting its contents into the mud; they were arrested and I paid their first fine.

Ends Love Affair

Sam and Virginia began falling in love. I could not have that. The girls' parents had trusted me to protect their virgin daughters, saying they would not let the girls go so far from home with anyone else in the world.

The parents also liked son George, who promised to help me look after the girls like a brother. Between us, after a lot of worrying and watching, we managed to break it up. I disliked meddling in young love's affairs but felt that sweet rascal Sammy of mine was only infatuated and might break Virginia's heart.

Virginia was my shadow—Sammy my pet. They vied with each for Mama's affection. I loved them all and tried not to show partiality.

George and Duke had been with me on several previous tours; they knew I was fond of them and they were not jealous that I pampered The Twins. Jim Mackey was quiet and dignified; Sammy restless and high strung.

All was quiet on the Java front when suddenly our Sammy fell ill. I took him to a doctor, who could find nothing serious, just run down. The lad refused his food, lost weight, grew so weak he could scarcely dance.

I begged him to lay off; he would not, so I put all my time and mother love on caring for him myself; cooked him special food and fed it to him in his room. I had to give him every dose of medicine to be sure it was taken. This brought him back to normal.

Monkey Joins Troupe

After an engagement in Batavia, we returned to Singapore to get the train up the peninsula to Penang. Now Sammy insisted that a monkey join the family. He bought one in the market place and named her Patsy.

Patsy was a damn nuisance from the start. I knew my baby would soon tire of her and he did; made a present of her to a hotel servant.

On the train proceeding through the lush jungles, The Twins became lost. After dinner, no one had seen them for several hours. First, I searched the train—then the rest of the troupe: No Twins! I was alarmed.

The conductors and passengers went through the train from end to end. I tried again, and as I stepped between cars I heard laughter. Those cars were not closed in and there sat the boys on the bottom step: Jim with a flashlight and Sam with a beebee gun.

Shooting at Tigers

"Boys! What are you doing there?" I asked. I nearly had a heart attack. Sammy said, "Oh, Mama, don't worry; brother and I are shooting at tigers in the jungle." When the consternation died down, did those Englishmen laugh!

"Shooting tigers from the steps of a train at night with a beebee gun and a flashlight." The Twins were not stupid—to them it was just playing for fun.

After Penang, we skirted India to Bombay; into the ballroom of the internationally known Taj Mahah. Here we found more colored musicians.

The windows of the Twins' suite looked out on a plaza full of pigeons. All of a sudden the police found a lot of dead pigeons lying about.

Ah! they watched The Twins—found they were both shooting pigeons from the windows of their room with the same bee bee guns. Mama paid another fine.

Straightening things in their room one day, I ran across a dozen fancy knives. I took The Twins to task. "Now listen," I said, "if you boys carry knives, Mama is going to get a gun."

"Oh no you ain't," they said, "because you're a Texas lady and if you carry a gun, brother and I will run away."

Souvenirs Only

I learned they only bought the knives as souvenirs and told me I could lock them up for safe keeping.

The Twins' success in Bombay brought me telegrams from many parts of India, desiring to engage the troupe, but we were all growing anxious to reach Paris, so I declined to accept.

Sailing once again, this time for the land of the Sphinx. Cairo! At last we were on the fringe of Europe. Here they turned over to me a legitimate theater with six European specialty acts to add to my troupe for a full length show. These were good artists and it put The Twins on their toes, but they won by a length in applause and press raves.

I was offered a hotel engagement near the Pyramids for all summer, but it was now like holding in wild horses, so eager were The Twins to reach Paree. I had to refuse engagements in Palestine, Bayruit and Athens and headed for Italy instead.

Competition Stiff

On the Continent at last! It was a different show business now with plenty of competition. But my troupe of brown skins were outstanding and The Twins continued to win new laurels at every stand.

We were held up four months in Italy playing Milan, Rome, Florence and Naples. Real girl trouble sets in. A hotel manager's daughter falls for Sammy. A young Italian's wife falls for Jim. George and Duke could handle their own love affairs but I had to manage The Twins, Rose and Virginia, were popular and attracted Italian boys, so George and I were kept busy chaperoning the girls.

Sam and Jim had grown more manly and even more sophisticated. I had taught them social etiquette, good table manners and improved their grammar.

They were now young gentlemen I could take anywhere with me. Jim used to say, "Mama, I told you your babies would do you proud." We were a close and affectionate family.

Closing in Italy I decided to give the troupe a two-week vacation on beautiful Lake Laguna in Switzerland, so that we would all be refreshed and rested for our descent on Paris—our next objective.

GILBERT ADAMS

Daily Mirror
New York, N.Y.

FUN WITH MUSIC

In Fun With Music, Youth Theatre's current revue, some fine talent, new to this group, is presented. The comedy of Billy Sands and the Skeptics, the singing of Gilbert Adams and Etta Prince, the dancing of Dela Lorrie and Hal Loman, all display ability and spirit. Some of the older members of the company contribute their special brands of entertainment — Jerry Jaraslow, Robert Sharon and others.

The material which has been provided for the use of the cast is uneven. The outstanding items are **Porterhouse Lucy**, a delightful travesty on the temptations of the black market, danced, sung and narrated wittily by Sands, Jaraslow, Loman and Dela Lorrie, and **Send a Letter to Harry "T,"** sung and clowned by Billy Sands. **Freedom is My Land**, by Lou Singer and Lewis Allen was sung with excellent effect by Gilbert Adams. A short but moving excerpt from Lou Cooper's **The Last Speech**, a Cantata based on the words of [illegible] and Roosevelt was sung very dramatically by Etta Prince and narrated by Robert Sharron.

Times 11-26-46

The effectiveness of this excellent material was dulled by the inclusion of old and pointless sketches and other material of undistinguished character. Certainly there are enough targets for the brand of political satire which has distinguished the Youth Theatre without having to dig back in the files for old stuff, successful though it may have been once upon a time. Also, at least for this reviewer, the efforts to get laughs by the use of pure smut are in bad taste. Billy Sands little hard work its current effort and they seemed a let-down. could be a smash hit. We should like to see them make this effort.

The Youth Theatre has many elements which should make it successful, and an audience which is most

Alberta Hunter Scores In Songs At Club Bali

By ALLAN McMILLAN
(For International Negro Press)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Alberta Hunter, International singing star, from tremendous success overseas with the distinguished USO Camp Shows Unit, No. 556, went on to further accomplishments here when she opened at the Club Bali in her first American appearance since 1943.

To say the least, Miss Hunter is an artist of rare musical ability. She has excellent poise and stage technique. When she sings a song you feel it; whether it's an old-timer like "Downhearted Blues" (which she introduced years ago) or something new like Duke Ellington's "I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues".

If La Hunter chooses a torrid torch song, it makes no difference because she sings with the soul of a majestic trouper seasoned with years of toil and experience in The Theatre.

Sang For Gen. Eisenhower

I doubt seriously if the management of the Bali has ever been so fortunate before as to have a personage of international fame as Miss Hunter for one of its entertainers. Their patrons should be doubly proud of this opportunity. To hear her sing in a night club is one of the rare blessings of a nitelifer because her sophisticated ballads have been heard around the world.

Athens, Bombay, Stockholm, Rome and every international capitol on earth has thrilled to the lilting vibrations that swelled their halls and hearts. Then too, she played opposite Paul Robeson in the London production of "Show Boat", followed Josephine Baker in the "Folies Bergere", and appeared on Broadway in "Mamba's Daughters" with Ethel Waters.

On her recent USO tour in Germany she sang a command performance for Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower upon the occasion of a special affair tendered in honor of Soviet Marshal Georgi K. Zhukov.

On Discs:

Jelly Roll's Jazz Piano

"I guess I am 100 years ahead of my time," Jelly Roll Morton wrote a few years before his death in 1941. "I laid the foundation of jazz and am still the flowing fountain."

Morton's words were a protest against the up-and-down existence he, and many fellow pioneers of jazz, knew. When he died his funeral expenses had to be paid for by the musicians' union. Poor health held him back in his last years. When swing came to the fore in the 30s, Morton complained bitterly, "This very minute you have confronting the world all kinds of Kings, Czars, Dukes, Princes, and Originators of Swing . . . I would like to put a lie-tester on many of these make-believe stalwarts of originality."

Morton, New Orleans pianist, composer, and bandleader, knew success only periodically. Today, some four years after his death, the new interest in "pure" jazz seems likely to give him the fame he longed for during his lifetime. Last season Victor issued an excellent album of his band recordings, and now Brunswick has just brought out an album of four of his piano solos, originally recorded in 1926 (*Jelly Roll Morton Piano Solos*, Brunswick Collectors' Series, Album No. B-1018, $2.10).

The piano solos show Morton at his best—a composer and pianist with roots in the free, lusty life of New Orleans at the turn of the century. Born in the 1880s, Morton grew and flourished, along with jazz, in the tenderloin district of the city—in the *maison joie* and the gambling house and the honky-tonk. There is a fine barrel-house flavor in Morton's piano. One feels the spirit of Mahogany Hall and almost smells the whiskey on top of the piano.

Morton plays *King Porter Stomp*, *The Pearls*, *Sweetheart o' Mine* and *Fat Meat and Greens* in the Brunswick album. They offer an important addition to any jazz collection. Someday, it is to be hoped, the recordings Morton did for the folk-music archives of the Library of Congress will be released to the public. In them, Morton played his music and told the story of his life and struggle. That must be quite a document.

Native African Music, Dances Scheduled To Be Staged Here

Asadata Dafora, recognized as one of the foremost choreographers of African music and dance in this country, will present the "Drama of the African Dance" at the Negro Masonic Temple tomorrow and Tuesday. Night performances will be at 8:30 p.m., and matinees will begin at 4:30 p.m.

The appearance of the dance group will be Birmingham's first opportunity to see the internationally acclaimed exhibition of authentic African dances.

Asadata Dafora was born in Sierra Leona, West Africa, where he learned the music and dance of his fathers. He finished high school in his native land, later furthering his education in England.

The dances, with their rhythmic accompaniment, have grown out of thousands of years of uninterpreted history, and each dance has a pointed and individual significance.

The program, which will be presented in two parts, will include "Song of Welcome," "Love Dance," "Bell Victory Dance," "Drum Solo," "Female Beauty Dance," "Festival Song," "Maiden Dance," "Dance of Appreciation," "Sudanese Belle Dance," "Dance of Excitement," "Dance of Strength" and "African Conga." The commentator will make explanatory comments during the presentations.

Tickets for the performances are available at the Temple Pharmacy and at P. D. Davis Grocery. A special section will be reserved for white spectators.

The attraction is being brought to Birmingham under the auspices of the African Culture Society of Birmingham, the Rev. W. L. Turner, director. The organization is a branch of the African Museum Association and is affiliated with the African Academy of Art and Research.

BUDDY AVERTS NEAR RIOT

ATLANTA, Ga.—Buddy Johnson, the popular young pianist-band-leader, has been given a commendation by city officials of Atlanta for his quick thinking in quelling a free-for-all which threatened to develop into a serious riot, on a recent one-night stand he played with his "Walk 'Em Rhythm" orchestra at the Municipal Auditorium here.

As several hot-headed persons exchanged blows and others began joining the melee, Buddy got a brilliant idea and quickly struck up his band to the strains of the National Anthem, which brought the crowd of more than 4,000 persons to immediate attention. In the meantime, a police riot squad arrived upon the scene and removed the trouble-makers from the auditorium.

Thanks to Buddy's action, possible bloodshed was averted and the dance proceeded in orderly fashion for the rest of the night.

Louis To Be Star in Galaxy Of Show Here Saturday

JOE LOUIS, who appears at the Mosque next Saturday night, will surround himself with a musical variety show for his current tour of 25 cities. Louis, himself making his first public appearance since his recent discharge from the armed services, will headline the show to tell some of the highlights of his fighting career and to give some intimation as to the manner in which he will defend himself against a future bout with Contender Billy Conn.

Supplying music for the show will be the orchestra of Luis Russell, the man once featured as pianist with Louis Armstrong's band. Russell's piano thumpings have been widely acclaimed and his records are collectors' items.

A year ago, Russell formed his own band, which has broken records at Harlem's famed Savoy, the Apollo Theater, the Royal Theater and Club Louisiana. His music has been a favorite with the champ, who asked Russell to accompany him on this current tour.

Featured as vocalist with the show will be diminutive Betti Mays, whose career began when she was pushed by her chums into an amateur contest at the Apollo Theater. Betti had no desire to sing—she wanted to be a dancer—but, to her amazement, she won the contest hands down. She was signed immediately for a chorus job with a night club and, two weeks later, when the manager wanted a feature dance number from one of his chorines, Betti was chosen for the spot. Again her success was instantaneous, and she became the star of the show.

To M-C the show, there will be Ralph Cooper, known as "the Clark Gable of Harlem." Cooper, who has been a headliner on stage, radio and in motion pictures, was the personal selection of Joe Louis, to serve as his verbal sparring partner during the interviews which are part of the entertainment.

Joe Louis and his show will be presented to the public by James Mathews, young Richmond promoter, who seeks to bring a variety of popular entertainments to local audiences. Mathews is a graduate of the University of Richmond, and was active in aiding the promotion of various War Bond and Victory Bond shows. His most recent presentation was that of Don Redman's orchestra, which played for the New Year's Eve dance at the Mosque. His next scheduled event will be the presentation of the Philadelphia Piano Symphony Orchestra of 12 pianos, which he will assist in bringing to the Mosque within the next few weeks.

The Joe Louis show is sponsored by the Sammis Grotto. Tickets are on sale at the Virginia Record Shop and Slaughter's Hotel.

Betti Mays, vocalist, will appear with Joe Louis Saturday.

Interpretative Dancer Scoffs at Idea That the Art Is Easy

WASHINGTON

Contrary to popular opinion that dancing is easy, Dorothy Adams, interpretative artist at a local night club, says it took one year to develop the idea and movements for the South Sea Island act which she has presented there for two weeks.

The setting for the dance is a Pacific island where Miss Adams, in the role of a native girl, lures a boat-load of ship-wrecked passengers into the jungle and dances for them until exhausted.

"The first step in perfecting a dance," according to Dorothy, "is to conceive an original idea and then visualize the different steps in your mind prior to executing them." Following this, she says, comes weeks of rehearsals alone and later with a band.

Native of St. Louis

Born in St. Louis, Miss Adams studied ballet dancing and the violin in her youth but later dropped her music lessons when she found her primary interest and talent lay in dancing.

In her early stage career she did ballet dancing but soon found there was little demand for it. Following this, she shifted to a song-and-dance act and later to interpretative work.

Although she likes dancing and is recognized as an accomplished performer, Miss Adams says she would rather be a singer because "they have so many different ways of making it."

Life of Dancer Short

"Whereas the stage life of a dancer is comparatively short, a singer can continue almost indefinitely," Miss Adams said. In support of this she cited royalties from recordings and band dates which can add considerably to the

income and opportunities for singer. Sat 2-16-46

Although born in St. Louis, Miss Adams now lives in Chicago where she has a home, husband, a Chow dog and a pet bird.

While in Washington she hopes to attend a session of the Senate filibuster on the Fair Employment Practice Bill.—L. LOMAX.

Ecksfine Began an American Career at Howard

Baltimore, Md.

WASHINGTON — Handsome singing maestro Billy Eckstine returns to the scene of his earliest triumph in taking to the stage of the Howard Theater here for a week's engagement, beginning Friday. Sat 2-23-46

With his name in lights on the Howard's marquee, it is in sharp contrast to the first time Billy appeared on the Howard stage some seven years ago.

He was at that time a student at Howard University with a burning ambition to make singing his career. Encouraged by his fellow students, he entered an amateur contest at the Howard. He copped first prize, and with it won a singing engagement at the local Cotton Club nitery.

His song in that contest was "I'm in the Mood for Love", then one of the popular hits of the day. It also happens that Billy's recording of the same song has brought it back to new nation-wide popularity this season.

THE MOSETTA DANCERS headline the bill in the new show at Cafe Society. They are, from left to right: Myrtle Fortune, Lucy Battle, and Anita Berry.

A Tribute to 'Fats' Waller's Memory Is Paid by Canadian Music Critic

Kansas City, Missouri
Call

The King is dead, but the King will live forever! It is just a little over two years ago since Thomas "Fats" Waller died at the age of 39. Suffering from bronchial pneumonia, the jovial, lovable "Fats" slumbered into eternity in the arms of his affectionate friend and advisor, W. T. (Ed) Kirkeby, aboard the Santa Fe Chief, as it pulled into the Kansas City, Mo., station.

On December 15, 1945, the second anniversary of Waller's untimely passing, Dillon O'Leary, widely read columnist and music critic of the Toronto (Canada) Globe and Mail, wrote an epic memorial tribute to the genius that was Waller's. O'Leary wrote "Spinning a few Waller discs on the phonograph, it is hard to believe that this great jazz pianist is dead. For "Fats" had the ability, more than any other jazzman, to vitalize his recorded sessions to the extent that they almost always sound like an "in-the-room" performance. 2-1-46

As a composer who wrote or collaborated on some 360 songs, many of them among the most melodically beautiful in American popular music, Waller's first rule as a pianist was to hang onto the melody. He disliked most of the loud blaring by large swing bands and preferred to lead small groups of from six to eight men. He hated anyone swinging the classics!! And of boogie-woogie, he said, "It's just monotonous. Boogie-woogie is all right if you want to beat your brains out for five minutes. But for more than that you got to have melody. Jimmie Johnson taught me that."

In 1928 he composed the tunes by which he will always be remembered, "Ain't Misbehavin'" and "Honeysuckle Rose." Among his other wonderful melodies are "Keepin' Out of Mischief Now," "I've Got A Feelin' I'm Fallin'," and "My Fate Is In Your Hands." Andy Razaf, who wrote the lyrics for most of Waller tunes said of his partner: "He could set the telephone book to music'. He probably recorded well over 500 songs in his brief, colorful career.

Unfortunately there is little available in the way of Waller records today. Among the many gems he recorded on Victor and Bluebird are: "Sweetie Pie," "You're Not The Only Oyster in the Stew," "Serenade for a Wealthy Widow," "Believe It, Beloved," "My Very Good Friend the Milkman," "Sugar Blues," "Latch On," "San Anton'," "Hey, Quit Kissin My Sister," "Honeysuckle Rose," "Clarinet Marmalade," "Yacht Club Swing," "Your Feet's Too Big,' and "West Winds." Of all these, only a few are currently available. The RCA-Victor people could perform a real service by re-issuing these and many others. 2-1-46

A vote of thanks to radio station disc jockeys for continuing to feature Waller recordings. No one will ever forget his full-chorded pianistics, his vocals with their satirical leer, and the fine bands he had behind him." A vote of thanks too, to Waller's talented protege, composer Pat Flowers, brilliant young piano genius, whose amazing keyboard technique and remarkable flair for showmanship are characteristically Waller-like. He bids fair to carry on the heritage of the great "Fats". The name of Thomas "Fats" Waller must be included among the all-time great immortals of the music world. The King is dead, but the King will live forever! Young Flowers will perpetuate his memory and his recorded works will be played till the end of time."

Lucky Millinder Installs Democratic Hiring Policy

American
2-1-46
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — Dynamaestro world as well as here in Ameri-

Lucky Millinder is one prominent ca, we can best prove that we be-
public figure who believes in lieve in the principles for which
practicing what he preaches. The we plead by setting a positive
colorful band leader has inaug- example.
urated a completely democratic
policy in choosing personnel for Color No Object
his expanding organization. Latest "I propose to do that from now
additions to his aggregation, John- on in selecting men to fill vacan-
ny Bello trumpet, Jerry Cox, cies in the band. The new men
bass, are both white. 2-1-46 will be chosen strictly on the basis
of their artistic ability
Millinder when questioned as musicianship, irrespective of
to whether or not these hirings color of their skins."
indicated a new policy with the Bello joined the Millinder
band said: "No, it is not a new crew about three months ago as
policy but a broad policy. third trumpet. He has proven him-

"In these troublesome times self a highly capable musician
when the minorities are on the unusual ability. As a result
spot in so many places in

has given him two promotions to date. This accounts for the fact that Bello is presently occupying the first trumpet chair in the band. 2-1-46

Several changes and additions will be made while the band is making its longest stand ever at the Savoy ballroom.

Discover 8-year-old Trumpet Prodigy

Tribune

Cootie Williams, famous ex-the budding genius bids fair to trumpeter and winner of two consecutive Esquire award for two years, has uncovered what he claimed, "This is almost believeable, if I hadn't heard this in history. At least says the old boy with my own ears and seen growler. "The trumpet fraternity with what sensa- him with my own eyes I'd say it is the greatest sensation business was impossible for anybody short to the piano crowd's Sugar Chile Robinson. Freddy, is a real challenger to the title of America's youngster to New York for greatest child jazz instrumentalist. one-night the youngster ment. It is Cootie's opinion that

66c 1946

General

Critics Laud Her Singing

Is she to follow in the footsteps of Ella Fitzgerald and Pearl Bailey? That's what Baltimoreans think about Joyce Boyd, sweet singer and personality girl, currently appearing at Ike Dixon's Comedy Club in the Monumental City. She's formerly of Jamaica, L.I., N.Y., and is making her night club debut here.

Bassist Slam Stewart dedicates opus to Serge Koussevitsky

Tribune
Los Angeles Cal
3-23-46

NEW YORK — Bassist Slam Stewart, formerly of the team of Slim and Slam, is said to be writing a classical opus which he will dedicate to Serge Koussevitsky, composer and conductor of the New York Philharmonic Symphony orchestra.

Sat.

Koussevitsky reportedly became a Stewart fan about a year ago when he attended a Town Hall jazz concert, declaring that if Stewart had chosen the classical field, he would have been one of the world's great bass violists.

Stewart, a graduate of Boston Conservatory and a former Juilliard student, will be at the bass when the conductor leads his orchestra in the premiere of the new number upon its completion.

King Cole And Louis Jordan Set Torrid Pace In Popularity Poll

Afro American
Baltimore, Md. II
Chicago Defender

By CONTEST EDITOR

If King Cole Trio and Louis Jordan's Tympany Five aren't the most popular units in this broad land you'll have to convince more than 50,000 voters who have registered in their favor already in the "1946 Popularity Poll."

3-16-46

And your Contest Editor is beginning to wonder how the proof will be presented and, even if so, how one can expect to have the Jordan-Cole fans accept the argument as final. However, both attractions are receiving stiff competition. Jordan from those newly arrived "Honeydrippers" and King Cole from Bill Kenny's Ink Spots, but not enough so to cause undue alarm. It is noticeable that band "Fan Clubs" voting for their particular large orks generally include on their ballots an equal number of votes for Cole and Jordan who are in different classifications.

3-16-46

For instance the "Hamperettes," a Lionel Hampton fan club in East Orange, N. J., sent in a flock of votes for the vibraharp star this week and every ballot also contained votes for Cole and Jordan. "The Four Vagabonds," leading commercial radio artists, jumped up the ladder this week when a flock of wires and other ballots came in for them but most of the ballots also plugged for Louis Jordan.

Naturally friends of the "Vagabonds" could not vote for King Cole because the famous trio is in the same classification with the former but there were no complications in the votes for the Timpany Five.

Sat.

Joe Bostic also received a big push from his friends in the East but the same friends wish King Cole to triumph in the "Specialty Artists" group. In this contest everybody is voting. Little Tommy Garrison, 5; and Janice Brookshire, age 6, both of New York, sent in votes for Count Basie. And then came another batch of votes from the Rev. Sadie B. Owens of Chicago who wishes Lionel Hampton to win.

Chicago, Ill.

Major protest this week came from Tennessee State College Singers who are pushing Eugene Carruthers. They thought their favorite should have enjoyed a higher rating in the contest based on the votes they sent in. The ballots reached us late, however, and could not be counted until this week. Friends, don't forget that each clipping from the paper counts 10 votes; every signature one vote each and wires informing us of your location count 100 votes. Keep check along with us and there can be no mistake. We wish to give you full credit for your votes and letters. If other attractions are receiving more support than your favorite it is no fault of ours.

Several surprises were witnessed in the voting this week. The Vagabonds in the Specialty Artists group; Lionel Hampton among the large orks and Thelma Carpenter and Dinah Washington in the female vocalists column, all gained on the leaders.

3-16-46

Duke Ellington, holding what he has and adding some votes was able to remain on top of the larger bands but Lionel Hampton moved into second place ahead of Count Basie. The contest closing April 1 has three more weeks to run. Get those ballots and wires in so as to hold what you have and gain if you can. Don't neglect to get behind your particular favorite attraction. Then too girls send in those pictures so the different stars may see as well as read of their major supporters.

Africans In Festival Of Folk Dance

New York, N.Y.
Amsterdam News
Sat 5-4-46

School Children In Tribute To Roosevelt

The African Academy of Arts and Research presented its third annual festival of dance and music at Carnegie Hall Thursday evening, and again Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was guest of honor. After expressing her full support of the work of the academy and the value of bringing the race closer to cement understanding and peace, she praised the singing of the school children, who paid a tribute to her late husband, and the artistic presentation by members of the festival cast.

Other speakers included Ozuomba Mbadiwe, president of the academy; Mbonu Ojike, executive director; Rev. James H. Robinson, Chairman; of the board of directors, and Maurice P. Davidson, chairman of the sponsor's committee.

Sat 5-4-46

The festival under title of "A Tale of Old Africa," was arranged and created by Asadata Dafora from authentic African sources, assisted by Etuka C. Okala-Abuta. Production advisor, Herbert Gellendre, and costumes by Rosalie Horton.

An impressive tribute was paid Franklin Delano Roosevelt by 50 children from PS 113 and the little Red School House. The children intoned the words of praise in perfect rhythm and enunication, the script written by Celia B. and Charles Wagner, directed by Celia Wagner and Martha Lembeck.

The story told of incidents in a village of a small West African kingdom before the white man's time, followed by the later visits of white traders, the predictions of a soothsayer, and the deplorable conditions of slaves in a slave ship. The dancing of girls of the African village was well timed and evenly paced, but would have held a better theatrical feeling with less repetition.

The lively movements of the male dancers, the warriors, were thrilling and exciting. Here one had the maddening swiftness and animal-like leaps of primitive fighters and frenzy of a call to war. Staging, costumes, songs and dancing were excellent and better in showmanship than previous festivals. Mr. Dafora's dancing retains the traditions of old Africa in rhythm and spirit.

Those who have witnessed other festivals were pleased to see Julie Adams in the role of the wise old king, Abdul Essen as the Soothsayer, Princess Orelia and Clemen- Bernice Samuels, and Randolph Scott.

Sat 5-4-46

The second performance on Friday night was scheduled to present the same festival with the addition of the Dunham Dancers, and announcement of the Wendell Willkie Award. Proceeds of the festival will go towards the $25,000 fund drive of the academy to maintain the program for one year. This program includes, Educational and Cultural Exchange; Arts and Festivals; Research and Information, and News and Public Relations.

Nora Holt

AFRICAN ACADEMY IN DANCE FESTIVAL

New York, N.Y.

Mrs. Roosevelt Guest of Honor as Third Annual Program Is Held at Carnegie Hall

New York Times

By JOHN MARTIN

4-27-46

The African Academy of Arts and Research last night presented its third annual festival of dance and music at Carnegie Hall, with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt once again as guest of honor. She spoke briefly and graciously on the values of peace of such organizations as the academy in promoting understanding between peoples. She was the first of several friends of the academy to receive a hand-carved mahogany table from Nigeria. Other speakers were Kingsley Ozuomba Mbadiwe, president of the academy; Mbonu Ojike, its executive director; Rev. James H. Robinson, chairman of the board of directors, and Maurice P. Davidson, chairman of the sponsors' committee.

The festival itself consisted chiefly of "A Tale of Old Africa," a soothsayer. It is well staged, company from other fields; Bernice children from Public School 113 Willkie Memorial Award. United and Randolph Scott. If and the Little Red School House Nations delegates are scheduled to half of the work proved under the direction of Mrs. Wagner occupy a box presented to them by ve than the first, it was and Martha Lembeck. As 11 Mrs. Roosevelt. ause of the difficulty of o'clock approached, the festival the pace after an inter- was still going strong, with Bill eeches and a drive for Robinson still due to drop in from half of the work proved the Cafe Zanzibar to close the pro- under the direction of Mrs. Wagner ceedings with some tapping. and Martha Lembeck. opened with a As 11 Mrs. Roosevelt. Tribute to Franklin A second performance tonight Roosevelt," written by Ce- will have Katherine Dunham and Charles Wagner, and re- her company as guest artists, and an entire village into slavery are Clementine Blount; not to forget Lia B. and Charle foiled by the vision conjured up by Princess Orelia, a newcomer to the cited and sung b ung by a large group of will include the academy's annual

Hot Club of France Moving Bar U.S. Negro Musicians

New York Amsterdam News

Learned All They Need From Colored Jazzmen, Now They Would Ban Touring American Negro Band Units

N.Y. N.Y.

By RUDOLPH DUNBAR

PARIS, (ANP)—French dance band leaders recently held a meeting at the "Hot Club of France" to revise plan to prevent dance orchestras from playing in France. The chief topic of discussion was Willie Lewis, a colored dance band leader whom they learn is due to go to Portugal with his band and to reenter Paris when his contract expires.

They argued that Willie Lewis is not an outstanding instrumentalist an therefore, there is nothing to learn from him and his orchestra. In view of these facts they see no reason why Lewis should be allowed to reenter Paris with his band. They further claim that France does not need bands that are inferior to French ones. (Willie Lewis is managing a Harlem bar and so far has not left the U. S. —Editor's Note.) 6-1-46

Leaders Becoming Prejudiced

The band leaders of the Hot Club of Franee are becoming increasingly prejudiced against Negro musicians. Most of them have studied at the National Conservatory of Music and are therefore excellent musicians thoroughly conversant with their instruments. They are using this device with which to show that Negro musicians are inferior to them and therefore should not be permitted to perform in France.

Another topic of discussion at the meeting was a move to compel French cabaret proprietors to engage white French musicians and disregard what they called "snobbism of the public" who always appreciate and demand coloerd musicians. They pointed out that the famous dance places and cabarets in Paris that are doing tremendous business, "Chez Florence," "Jimmy's Bar," and the "Coupole Dancing," have all engaged colored musicians thereby making it impossible for the white band leaders to get a break. In the light of all these grievances the French band leadres have decided at the meeting to forward a petition to the Syndicate of Musicians in order that the government may take action on their behalf.

Ingratitude to Negro Musicians

It is needless to say that this procedure against Negro dance musicians is profoundly distasteful, not mentioning of course, the ingratitude which it portends. The Hot Club of France should have been the last place in which to breed and develop anti-racial feelings against Negro musicians for it is within the precincts of that enclosure where progressive French musicians congregate to study and copy the idioms of Negro dance bands and individual stylists.

The Hot Club of France is littered with documentary material pertaining to Negro musicians which the members use for illustrating their progarms at various jazz festivals and giving radio talks. In sum total, the Hot Club of France is distinctly Negroid in its conception.

When the club was in embryo, it was given a great amount of assistance by Arthur Briggs, the famous Negro trumpet player.

American Negroes Taught French

It is the American Negroes who have taken jazz to France and literally taught it to the French musicians. Admittedly, they have been very good students and indeed, they have made phenomenal progress in the exposition of jazz and swing music but they do not possess that magic subtlety and rhythmic exuberance that are indigenous with Negro musicians. It is the American Negro who have made famous several establishments in Paris which would have remained in obscurity had it not been for them. One notable example is "Chez Florence" which has reopened with Arthur Briggs and his orchestra. It was named after the wife of Palmer Jones, a famous entertainer in her day.

It was Palmer Jones, who had brought this establishment into being. He had a staff of entertainers that were second to none and they amassed a colossal fortune for the proprietor of the establishment. No French band, not even in a hundred years, would be capable of producing such a feast of entertainment. Royalties, titled people, diplomats and millionares from all over the world flocked to Chez Florence for the entertainment and music.

Palmer Jones and his men could easily have become the proprietors of Chez Florence. The distinguished clientele followed them anywhere they performed. Then there were such places like the "Michodiere," "Ciros," "Les Ambassadeurs," "Le Pirroquet," 'Florida," "Zelli's", "Palermo" "Le Grand Ecart" and several other establishments of lesser importance.

All of these places were kept going only by the influx of wealthy Americans and Englishmen. Argentine

WILLIE LEIVIS

and other foreign visitors contributed also to swell the patronage but were in the minority. This wealthy set moved from one place to the other during the cycle of the season's fashionable events in France.

Naturally, wherever they frequented, there was always a priority for Negro musicians and entertainers much to the delight of the proprietor whose sole interest is to have a successful season with a big turnover in cash.

The band leaders of the Hot Club of France have given birth to a mean decoy under ugly disguise. I have not heard Willie Lewis' band but I am sure that having just left America, he has collected a band of musicians who can play polyphony that will excite the nerves and create hypnotic emotions.

Eckstine Makes First Featurette

The Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK — Billy Eckstine, the bronze singing idol, made his screen debut this week in an as yet untitled musical featurette under the auspices of the Associated Producers, featuring his entire band and songstress Ann Baker.

The film which will run approximately 25 minutes, is slated to be released in early September as the new company's initial entry in the big-time motion picture producing field. Sat. 7-13-46

Mixed Jazz For Tolerance

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Illinois

Coast College Promotes Good Will

HOLLYWOOD — Esposing the theory thta "hot jazz" is fine providing it's dished out in proper environment, University of California, Los Angeles, held a live concert on campus, under auspices of school's Carver (interracial equality) Club.

Clarence A. Dykstra and Student Council angle in staging affair was school's official theory that show promoted racial tolerance in that it socially threw together various races. 6-27-46

Talent including King Cole Trio, Benny Carter and three soloists from band current at Trianon. Lester Young, Kay Starr, Lucky Thompson, Red Callendar Trio. Ray Bauduc, Eddie Beale Quartet, Charley Parker and host of other musikers. Herb Jeffries, of Exclusive Records and a former Ellington vocalist, emceed. Event was staged by Frances Kelly, operator of Fran-Tone Records.

Pitched in Royce Hall Auditorium, concert drew 800 students at $1 a head. University earmarked $500 profit went to UCLA scholarship fund. King Cole Trio, Carter, Jeffries and Miss Kelly worked for nothing; other musikers got $20 apiece.

Forty Other American Artists Cited by Terry

Baltimore, Md. Afro-American

NEW YORK—In recognition of her outstanding service to humanity in the China, Burma-India Theater of Operations, Alberta Hunter, distinguished American singer, has been awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Ribbon by Lt. General Wheeler, commanding general of that war theater.

The award was made to Miss Hunter and 40 other American artist upon the official order issued by command of Major General Terry and signed by Vernan Evans, Major General, G.S.C. Chief of Staff.

Miss Hunter spent many months overseas entertaining men and women of the Armed Forces, traveling more than 30,000 miles under all sorts of adverse conditions.

Accorded Ovation

With her celebrated troupe of USO-Camp Shows' entertainers, Unit 556, "Rhythm of the Blues," she carried the banner of "American good will' and with her company was the first to appear in a "command performance" for General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Field Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery and Soviet Marshall Georgi K. Zhukov. 5-18-46

Upon this occasion she was accorded the greatest ovation ever tendered an American artist headlining a USO unit. General Eisenhower selected the Hunter sextet including Mae Gaddy, Jean Starr and the Three Rhythm Rascals, over a list of great theatrical names then in the ETO.

Among them were Amos 'n Andy, Marlene Dietrich, Sonja opera star; Mae Myrtle Gaddy, Henie, Mickey Rooney, the Copa Leonard Caston, Keenan Wynn, cabana revue, Hal McIntyre's Paul G. Waner, William Gargan, band, and others. 5-18-46 Ollie E. Crawford, Alfred Elkins

Among other prominent the and the Rhythm Rascals.

atre, motion picture and sport stars to receive the award were Henry Armstrong, only boxer to ever hold three world championship titles at one time; Paulette Goddard, distinguished motion picture star; Lily Pons, famed

"Pop" Concerts Begin Fifth Week of the Season at Carnegie Hall

Ben Greenhaus

Tuesday's "Pop" concert will feature American folk music. There will be quite a few soloists that evening, among them Tom Scott, ballad singer and master of ceremonies; Mary Lou Williams, pianist, and Susan Reed, singer of folksongs.

[From Late Edition of Yesterday's TIMES.]

More Jazz at 'Pops' Concert

Last night's "Pop" Concert at Carnegie Hall was devoted to jazz for the third consecutive Monday, but it was given by a different group, consisting of members of the bands of Cafe Society Uptown and Cafe Society Downtown, with Mary Lou Williams as the feature.

GILLESPIE STOOPS TO STAND BUT GIVES WITH RE-BOP

. . . Dizzy does to hot music what Stravinsky did for classical

Re-Bop With Fringe on Top

Even 'Greats' Hail Gillespie, That Tempestuous Trumpeter

Post, Washington, D.C.

RE-BOP . . . with a fringe on top! A couple of incoming letters indicate some of you cats don't know whiskers from tails when it comes to Dizzy Gillespie, whose Re-Bop music I referred to when writing about Woody Herman and Lionel Hampton. Here then, is an intro- to the tempestuous trumpeter.

Dizzy is the guy who currently has more rabid followers among fellow musicians than any other one individual. Depending on their degree of devotion, his fans variously describe him as the greatest force in music since Benny Goodman, since Louis Armstrong or since J. S. Bach. (On the other hand, his numerous detractors flatly call him the worst influence on music since singing commercials.) Sunday

BILL GOTTLIEB

Gillespie protagonists range from established jazz greats like Coleman Hawkins to teen-aged horn men giggling around on non-union jobs. Whole orchestras, like those of Herman, Hampton and Krupa, are on extensive Gillespie kicks and scarcely a single modern orchestra fails to yield some nuggets of Re-Bop

Stoops in Standing

Devotion to Dizzy tends to be complete. Enter any musicians' hangout and you're almost certain to find characters who affect berets, like the one Dizzy sports . . . or, more typically, wear a small goatee, "just like our boy, Diz." Fanatics even stoop when standing to imitate their idol. Dizzy is the worst blow to good posture since the debutante slouch.

Dizzy is to hot music what Stravinsky was to classical: the pioneer in the successful introduction of radically unconventional harmonies, whether in progression of solo notes or in chords formed at any instant by one or more musicians.

It is significant that Herman Herd, most musically advanced of the big name bands, is reputed to listen most for inspiration to the records of Stravinsky and Gillespie (plus those of another innovator, Ellington).

This Gillespie man utterly shatters harmonic cliches which, through centuries of repetition, have come to be regarded as the

He's No Phony 5-19-46

Many top-flight musicians with whom I've spoken about Dizzy have found him wanting in technique . . . but only the most conservative have accused him of being a phony of being blindly and maliciously discordant. One thing is certain . . . the young musicians who gather wherever he works (currently the Spotlite Club on 52d st.) listen with an intensity that denotes understanding. And these devotees add up to enough business to warrant the inauguration, this week, of a large, 16-piece Gillespie orchestra in place of the small unit he now uses. 5-19-46

Defying conventional harmony is a difficult mechanical job, like trying to use a knife with your left hand when you're right-handed.

Yet, amazingly enough, Dizzy generally executes his maneuvers at a breakneck pace.

Miss Real Thing 5-19-46

Unfortunately, to use a much overworked observation about Gillespie's music, Dizzy's imitators generally succeed only in copying his frantic tempos. They miss the heart of his musical inventiveness and substitute "clinkers" for calculated dissonances.

Re-Bop, the term used to describe this music (also sometimes called Be-Bop, for the benefit of you semanticists), describes, onomatopoetically, the little two and three note figures that Dizzy, Charlie Parker and other pioneer Re-Boppers employ. These figures are played in staccato fashion and employ both eccentric accents and note sequences. Post.

The treatment of the title phrase in Dizzy's Guild record of "Salt Peanuts" is a perfect illustration. Other representative sides are "Groove in High" (Guild), "Shaw Nuff" (Guild), "Congo Blues" (under Red Norvo, Comet) and "Night in Tunisia" (under Boyd Raeburn, Guild).

To hear the Gillespie influence

catch the brass work in Woody Herman's "Apple Honey" (Columbia) or wait for a forthcoming platter by Gene Krupa (Columbia), to be titled "Calling Dr. Gillespie." It features the Krupa sax action softly playing one after another of Gillespie-like phrases, with Dizzy-ish interruptions by piano and Trumpeter Red Rodney who, by the way, slouches and wears a goatee.

Cootie Discovers Trumpet Prodigy

Afro-American

DAYTON, O.—Cootie Williams, trumpeter and winner of the Esquire Award for two consecutive years, has uncovered what may easily be the greatest sensation of the jazz music business in eight-year-old Freddy Harrison, child trumpet prodigy. 6-8-46

Williams, here for a one-night dance engagement two weeks ago, was asked to give the youthful genius an audition. On hearing the youngster play, Williams exclaimed: "This is almost unbelievable; if I hadn't heard this boy with my own ears and seen him with my own eyes I'd say it was impossible for anybody short of at least sixteen to do it."

Williams has arranged to move the youngster to New York for some formal training and to give him a lot of personal development. It is Cootie's opinion that the budding genius bids fair to become the greatest trumpeter in history. Billimore

At least says the old growler: "The trumpet fraternity now has a convincing answer to the piano crowd's 'Sugar Chile' Robinson. Freddy is a real challenger for the title of America's greatest child jazz instrumentalist." Mt.

New York Really a 'Hot' Town As All Jazz Kings Play There

IT may be hard to believe, but the established art form of hot music (swing, jazz, ragtime) is so young that practically every one of the "giants" who was produced since the music's inception is alive.

What's more, almost all of them, by some rare coincidence, recently were playing simultaneously in New York — Bunk Johnson, Louis Armstrong, Eddie Condon, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Dizzy Gillespie.

GOTTLIEB

Jazz (and I use this term to describe all hot music) reached its first formal state of development, according to most musicologists, some few years before the turn of the century, perhaps around the time of the Spanish-American War.

Before then the primitive field and church music of the Southern Negroes had not yet been mixed with the more sophisticated European forms found in New Orleans. Until this happened jazz did not become a music that we'd clearly recognize as the progenitor of, let's say, the music played by the Woody Herman orchestra.

(Hollywood to the contrary, there was no connection between Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and the beginnings of ragtime, jazz, swing or anything else.)

Johnson Now 67

An energetic student of jazz could, this past week, have gotten a first hand synopsis of the development of jazz by a handful of men most responsible for its present state.

First he'd have gone to hear Bunk Johnson, 67, and his sexegenarian sextet, who are reproducing at the Stuyvesant Casino much the same music that made Bunk one of the first "name" musicians some 45 years ago.

Then to the Aquarium for Louis Armstrong, unquestionably the greatest of all jazz instrumentalists. So great was Louis' trumpet virtuosity that he is given principal credit for the breakdown of the ensemble style characteristic of original jazz and the substitution of a music dominated by soloists.

From there to catch Eddie Condon, who plays at his own club of the same name. Eddie is spokesman for the vaguely defined but highly publicized "Chicago" period jazz that thrived in the 20's and was the outgrowth of the music made by Midwest school boys who imitated New Orleans jazz men.

Duke Most Exciting

Our ubiquitous jazz student would naturally have visited Duke Ellington, too, currently at the Paramount Theater (and due to play the Watergate in Washington June 6). The Duke is the greatest figure jazz has produced. His composing, arranging, playing and, most of all, his ability to mold his men into an integrated unit, has been responsible for the most colorful, exciting jazz ever made.

ALUMNI OF THE YOUTH CENTER had a get-together Sunday afternoon to go over again some of the things they did in *The Cradle Will Rock, Of V We Sing* and others of their productions. Prominent among those who came back for the occasion were (l. to r.) Marc Blitzstein, Betty Garrett, Lou Cooper and Muriel Gaines. PM Photo by Steven Derru, PM

Carnegie Concerts

The Carnegie 'Pop' schedule for this week is as follows:

Tuesday, June 11, highlights **Song Writers on Parade**, with Bert Shefter, conductor-pianist, on the podium and Irving Caesar, master of ceremonies.

Wednesday, June 12, with David Broekman on the podium, will be **Highlights of the Opera**, featuring soloists, Amri Galli-Campi, coloratura soprano; Thelma Votipka, mezzo-soprano; Thelma Altman, contralto; Guilio Gari, tenor; Ivan Petroff, baritone; and William Wilderman, bass.

Thursday, June 13, with the young composer-conductor Arthur Kreutz directing the Philharmonic musicians, will feature Natalia Bodanya, soprano; and Hubert Norville, tenor; and Teddy Wilson, popular jazz pianist.

Friday, June 14, features **Songs and Dances of the USSR**, with two conductors, Eugene Plotnikoff and Dr. Antin Rudnitsky, sharing the podium. Soloists are Gary Graffman, pianist; Nadine Ray, soprano; Zinaida Alvers, contralto; Ilya Tamarin, tenor; Stefan Kozakevich, baritone; A. Hamsky, accordionist; and the Radischev Russian Folk Dance Group. Songs of the Soviet Republic including **Steppe** by Kowal, **Don Cossack Song** by Chemberdji, **Our Boy** by Miliutin and **Meadowland** by Knipper, will be sung by Mr. Kozakevich, and the young Radischev Folk Dance Group will present a Ukrainian Dance and **Crimean Dance and Finale of the Republics** by Polyanka.

Saturday, June 15, program with Sydney Baron directing and Theodore Cella, composer-conductor on the podium for his own composition **The Lido** will feature William Horne, tenor; Paula Lenchner, soprano; and Miriam Solovief, violinist.

TEDDY WILSON, jazz pianist at Carnegie Thursday night.

Willie Bryant, The Magician

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Band Leader Adds Tricks To His Act
Sat. 8-31-46

NEW YORK—Willie Bryant, the irrepressible crown prince of swing, is currently studying the mystic art of magic under the tutelage of Scarne, the greatest magician in the world.

Willie is currently readying his band for a tour of theatres and one nighters taking them from Coast to Coast. Bryant can already claim to be the most versatile maestro in the music business with achievements on the legitimate stage, motion pictures, radio and the vaudeville stage. During his tenure in show business Willie has acted as master of ceremonies, comedian, singer, band leader and actor. He played the leading role in that Broadway hit, "Mamba's Daughters."

Not satisfied with all these accomplishments Willie is adding magic to his routine so that he can do something new between band numbers to entertain and surprise his audiences.

Willie's versatility has always served him well. It has made him the perennial favorite of dance lovers and theatre goers. Although this band headed by Bryant is a few months old it is already challenging all the orchestras in the field for national prominence. If Willie keeps climbing as rapidly as Bryant can already claim he has in the past Cab Calloway and the others had better look to their laurels.

Be Bop Music Recognized by Smithsonian Institute

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 9-7-46

WASHINGTON

Dizzy Gillespie, trumpet playing maestro, has just received an unparalled honor in the annals of jazz history from the Smithsonian Institute.

C. G. Abbot, secretary, has requested that Gillespie and his orchestra make a special record demonstrating the "Be Bop" style. This recording will be preserved in the musical archives of the institute.

Mr. Abbot's letter explained that the board of directors felt that "Be Bop" music is a new style which is as radical to today's music as 20th century jazz was to the 19th century sweet music.

It is the institute's wish to preserve this style for study by posterity. This honor places Gillespie in a class heretofore reserved for such men as Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, etc.

Gillespie started this new style of music in 1945 while playing on 52nd St. in New York and it was such an instantaneous hit that within a fortnight imitators had sprung up from coast to coast.

"Shorty" Out of U.S. Academy Millinder Wants Him in Band

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 9-14-46

LOS ANGELES—Band leader Lucky Millinder has wired Shorty McWilliams, former army football star, an offer to join his band for the express purpose of singing the national novelty smash "Shorty's Got to Go."

McWilliams is the pigskin hero around whom a controversial storm broke when he resigned from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point to return to his pre-war alma mater, Mississippi State, for the rest of his collegiate training—and incidentally play football.

Millinder, on reading of the young athlete's plight, immediately conceived the idea of having him appear with his band and singing the sensational novelty song. McWilliams was given the option of naming his own figure. Addition of McWilliams to the Millinder organiaztion would not only present too much of a problem since there are already several white members in the band.

General

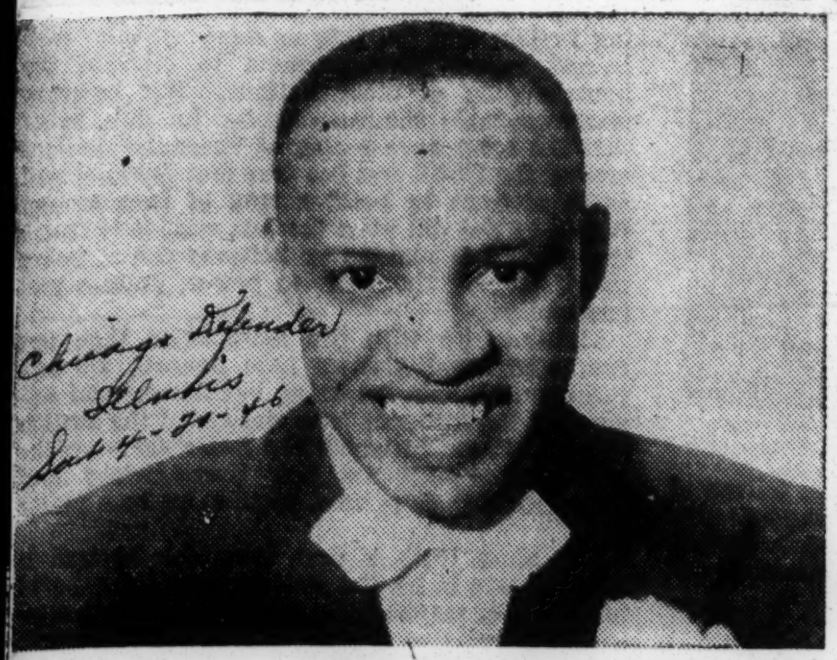
Lionel Hampton Wins Annual Popularity Poll

ELLA FITZGERALD

KING COLE TRIO

Here They Are - Best For 1946 Season!

BILLY ECKSTINE



LIONEL HAMPTON

LOUIS JORDAN

For the past three months this newspaper has conducted a popularity contest among bands, vocalists and special combinations and this week we present your choices. From practically every corner of the globe have come ballots from fans, servicemen and women and from stars of stage, screen and radio as well. We presented their names and asked you to vote for your choice for the most popular attractions. Among the big bands Lionel Hampton, winner in 1945 repeats in a sort of "winner, and still champion" scene. Louis Jordan was voted the most popular among the small bands and the King Cole Trio is voted the best in their special field. The male vocalists presented a real problem with Billy Eckstine nosing out Al Hibbler, the Duke Ellington chirper at the last moment. The most popular female vocalist is Ella Fitzgerald who replaces Lena Horne, last season's winner. Billie Holiday placed second to Ella, pushing Lena further down the ladder. Lionel Hampton's victory offered a picture similar to last year when he defeated Duke Ellington, again the runner up, in a torrid race. All winners will be presented with trophies emblematic of their sensational victories.

La Fitzgerald Tops Vocalists

Chicago Defender
King Cole, Louis
Jordan, Eckstine
Victors

By CONTEST EDITOR

With more than 100,000 votes cast for him, Lionel Hampton retains his crown as "Most Popular Band" in one of the most sensational contests ever staged by this publication.

Duke Ellington, as in 1945, finished in second place. The burst of speed which sent Lionel on to final victory, was aided greatly by his two recent conquests of Broadway. Never before in history has a Negro band upset New Yorkers as did Lionel, first at the Strand and later at the new policied Aquarium.

'Tis a matter of record that special protection for the glass windows at the Aquarium were necessary when Lionel began his nightly concerts. This same sort of demonstration was exhibited at the Strand, and, for that matter, is true wherever Hampton plays. He has taken jitterbug America by storm. Thus, when an entire nation began signing ballots for Hampton it was a foregone conclusion that he'd be difficult to beat.

Fitzgerald Battles

The female vocalists also engaged in a tough contest. Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday were neck and neck right down to the wire with no more than a few hundred votes separating them at any time. The push that sent Ella to victory came the last day when a flock of ballots arrived from New York and the West Coast.

Equally as strong in his division was Louis Jordan who scored a somewhat easy triumph over the small bands. Louis likewise profited by his recent successes on Broadway. Playing the Zanzibar performance was the most thrilling to arrive on Broadway in moons. His recordings have also proved profitable, especially "Ration Blues" and "Caldonia."

Cole Is Victor

King Cole who triumphed over the specialty artists was rushed by both the Vagabonds and Ink Spots but their popularity won out in the end. Having triumphed in several other "polls" about the country King Cole was on the tongue of most of the voters and they went to town for him.

The contest afforded lots of pleasure for all involved. Of vast interest were the number of foreigners who voted. Many of them have never seen the artists they voted for but have heard recordings and worldwide radio hookups. They based their likes and dislikes on what they've heard over the air and on their own private machines.

Women played a big part in the with critics all agreeing that his contest with more than two-thirds

THE WINNERS

LARGE BANDS	
LIONEL HAMPTON	108,429
Duke Ellington	70,885
Count Basie	46,554
Cootie Williams	39,156
Eddie Vinson	33,748
Erskine Hawkins	31,163
Sweethearts of Rhythm	31,008
Eddie Mallory	31,003
Earl Hines	30,646
Tiny Bradshaw	30,532
Buddy Johnson	30,333
Cab Calloway	30,119
Lucky Millinder	28,117
Billy Eckstine	27,008
Louis Armstrong	26,097
Jimmie Lunceford	26,055
Andy Kirk	26,023
Ernie Fields	25,877
Benny Carter	25,087
Claude Hopkins	25,045
King Kolax	25,015
Lil Green	25,013
Noble Sissle	24,111
Louis Russell	24,110
Gerald Wilson	23,108
Darlings of Rhythm	23,007

SMALL BANDS	
LOUIS JORDAN	114,665
Honeydrippers	63,447
John Kirby	54,188
Tab Smith	54,107
Eddie Heywood	53,098
Earl Bostic	45,108
Rex Stewart	41,886
Phil Moore	41,559
Dallas Bartley	41,327
Red Allen	41,228
Ray Nance	41,111
Cornelius Davis	40,108
Hilliard Brown	27,001
Jesse Miller	27,001
Cannon's Swingsters	26,675
Red Saunders	25,438

FEMALE VOCALISTS	
ELLA FITZGERALD	93,545
Billie Holiday	87,330
Lena Horne	49,118
Dinah Washington	47,886
Joya Sherrill	46,176
Thelma Carpenter	46,098
Ida James	44,086
Madelyn Green	41,175
Dottie Saulters	40,118
Savannah Churchill	40,008
Winnie Brown	38,003
Ella Johnson	38,001
Marva Louis	28,554
Ivy Anderson	26,773
Delores Parker	23,116

Una Mae Carlisle	23,007
Bettye Mays	23,002
Mary Hall Pemberton	22,666
Annisteen Allen	20,403
Lil Green	20,385

Sat. 6-29-46

MALE VOCALISTS

BILLY ECKSTINE	89,645
Al Hibbler	88,327
Lord Essix	66,333
Jimmy Mitchell	50,532
Earl Warren	50,432
Rubel Blakey	50,175
"Gatemouth" Moore	47,098
Mel Moore	46,443
"T-Bone" Walker	45,118
Wynonie Harris	45,087
Bob Anderson	45,063
Louis Armstrong	45,000
Sonny Carter	44,675
Jimmie Rushing	44,543
Lon Monroe	44,332
Eugene Carruthers	43,232

SPECIALTY ARTISTS

KING COLE TRIO	106,653
Ink Spots	47,287
Mills Brothers	47,187
Four Vagabonds	46,098
Charioteers	46,077
Golden Gate Four	45,099
Four Brown Dots	43,076
Red and Curley	43,055
Red Caps	40,754
Four Jumps of Jive	40,165
Cats 'N Jammers	35,087
Deep River Boys	33,756
Delta Rhythm Boys	33,167
Ike Perkins	30,086
Johnny Moore's Blazers	30,076
Leonard Ware Trio	27,114
Four Tons of Rhythm	27,089
Four Shades of Rhythm	27,076
Three Loose Nuts	20,165
Clarence Black's Trio	19,883
Bob Carter Trio	19,711
Buster Bennett Trio	19,093
Rhythm Rascals	19,076

JOSEPHINE BAKER: the St. Louis girl, who after two decades of stardom in Paris, is still the idol of the French people.

French Bans Misnamed Anti-Negro

Amsterdam News

By NORA HOLT

THE MOVE OF FRENCH dance band leaders to tighten requirements of foreign musicians to enter France need not be construed as a forecast of increasing prejudice and anti-racial feelings against Negro musicians.

The indictment as released through ANP by Rudolph Dunbar, young composer and conducter now living in France, (and who incidentally has had a signal success as guest conductor of some of the best French symphony orchestras) while true on some points, leads to an inference that the French are developing a Bilbo attitude toward Negroes that we have reason to doubt. If this feeling is germinating, such a release as Mr. Dunbar recently by-lined will only aid in fanning a spark into a flame.

Negro musicians and travelers to France have not forgotten the freedom and good will extended them by the loyal French people after World War I. And we wonder if there is not an insidious move afoot to discredit Negroes in their estimation trap we cann ill afford to be led into. 6-8-46

Ruled During 1920's

Bands and entertainers had an open market in Paris for more than ten years during the 1920's, terminated only by the depression of the 1930's. They held key spots in the most fashionable clubs and boites, while the French musicians took low and had to settle for mixed tango bands. Granted they were annoyed at being deprived of making a living, and even then made protests, but they cannot be scourged for improving their techniques by study and, imitation if you will, to the extent they now feel adequate to possibly play Negro rhythms, and are trying to thwart serious inroads on their economic status.

This does not represent of itself an anti-Negro state of mind, rather it expresses the keen thinking of a progressive group who desire to preserve and protect their musical and financial position in their own country.

Sat. 6-8-46

Noble Sissle, prominent band leader, who has just returned from a successful USO tour, tells me that two French bandsmen, Joe Boullion, with Josephine Baker, and Ray Ventura, have excellent bands. Ventura has young Martinique vocalist whom he considers a second Billy Banks. Sissle's own years in Paris were filled with some of the highlights of his brilliant career. For four straight years he led his 15- piece band of all American Negroes at Fischer's smart "Les Ambassadeurs." There were labor restrictions even then for he had to have a 50-50 set up. He worked with an 18 piece French symphony orchestra and a 12-piece tango band. When the depression came, cuts in men had to be made and his was the last band to leave Paris. Recently he has been in communication with Fischer for a return engagement but the food situation has been too problematical to open the swanky night spot.

Labor Laws Favorable

Labor laws of France permit foreign bands to enter Paris on a one third per cent basis, (three French musicians to one foreigner) and no doubt some combinations will soon be given visas as business perks up under the Leon Blum negotiated French credit for $1,400,000.

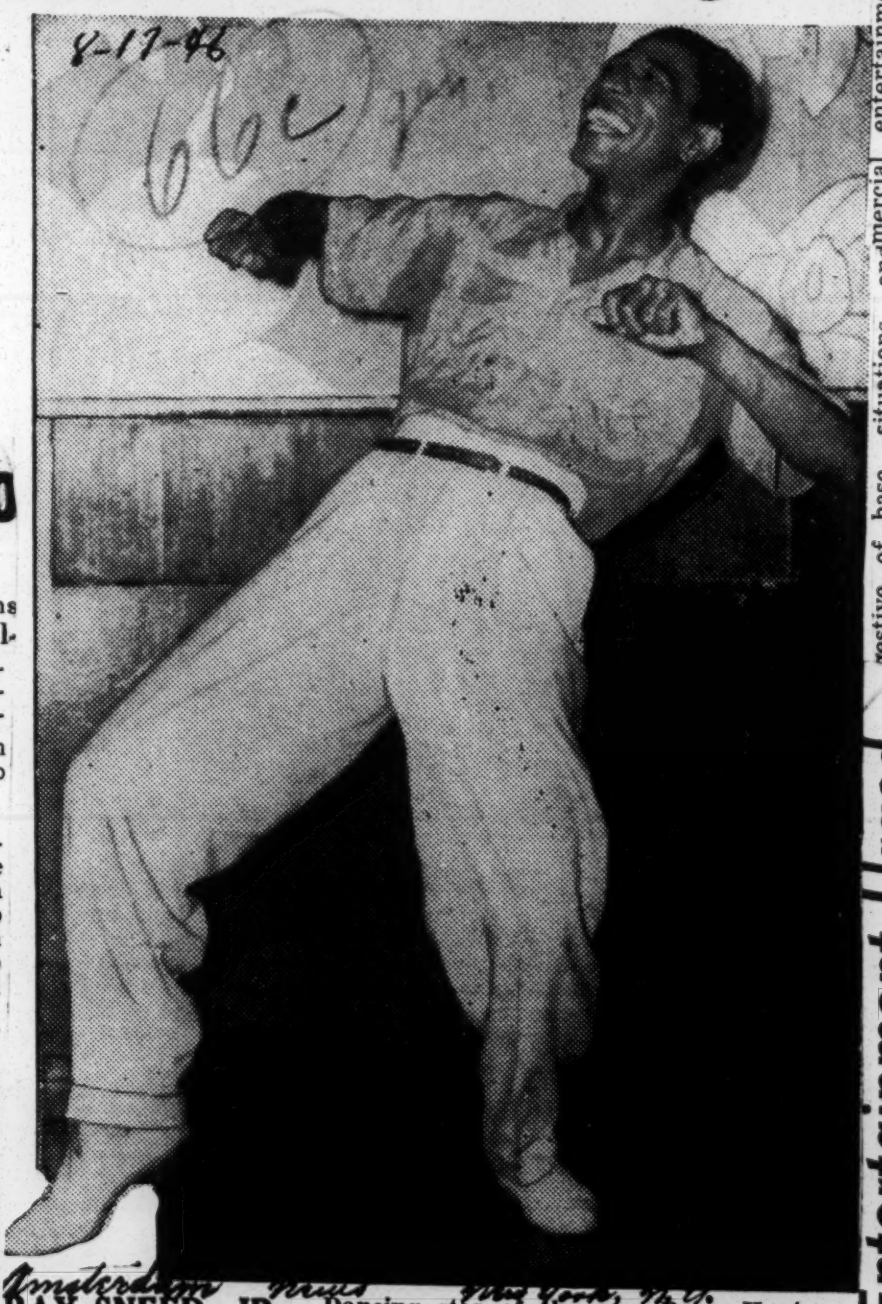
Their requirements are favorably compared to our closed door policy to foreign musicians. Rather than whine about the movement of the "Hot Club of France," our musicians could look around for new territories to explore. Why not sound out Soviet Russia whose sympathetic attitudes toward the Negro people are being so widely propagandised throughout the country. And our other Allies, England, Australia and China. In the meantime they might follow the lead of French musicians and protest the bad breaks they are getting right here in America. Do you hear any Negro bands on commercially sponsored programs or in large hotels, with the exception of the Lincoln and Sherman Hotel of Chicago?

Cites Article in Amsterdam

Dan Burley wrote an article last week about the impossibility of songwriters to get their works performed, even by Negro musicians. Like the weather, everyone concedes it's a bad situation but no one does anything about it. Sat. 6-8-46

Our relations with the French people have always been cordial and genuinely sincere. They gave testimony of that friendship by a wider latitude of freedom and hospitality than we receive even in our own country. This we would be directed against a wholesale invasion of their entertainment field, as such, and not, from our point of view, pernicious anti-Negro propaganda. We might clean house here before antagonising one of our best neighbors by libels of ingratitude and prejudice.

Master Of The Dancing Art



Amsterdam News New York, N.Y.

RAY SNEED, JR.: Dancing star of the new Patsy Hunter-produced revue at Smalls Paradise. Called by critics, the Black Paul Draper, Sneed's dancing excites audiences to loud applause and he gets many encores as he interprets moods and ideas to the smooth music of Chris Columbus and his band. Sneed once was the sensation of the Zanzibar floor show. Sat. 8-17-46

Better Entertainment Urged by Chicago Urban League Head

Sat. 6-15-46

CHICAGO — (ANP) — Frazier "Most of the stage shows seen T. Lane, acting executive director in theatres lean strongly toward of the local Urban League branch, the burlesque type," he said, "Most last week, called for an end to the jokes are smutty and sug- "debasing burlesque entertain-

gestive of base situations and usually depend upon family relationships to be successful.

"The average show should be for adults only, but we find places crowded with high ment for colored consumption." youth and young adults. discussion of juvenile delinquency, crap shooting was the chief source of laughter and applause.

"Our name bands may be considered in a different role," he said, "except that most of their popular jazz and blues numbers have lyrics which tell an off-color story of sex relations or dumb idiocisms. In any Kersands and Billy King as "low," A jungle scene was always included orchestras and performers have contributed, crap shooting was never omitted done a good job in improving race and comiled and grammatical errors were relations."

General

Fat Lady and the Barker

Graphic Hous

June Richmond and Lew Parker of the musical about a carnival, "Are You With It?" which moves to the Shubert Tuesday.

Rex Stewart solos with N.Y. Philharmonic

NEW YORK — Combo-leader Rex Stewart appeared as cornet soloist at Carnegie hall here yesterday (Friday) when the New York Philharmonic orchestra undertook its first modern jazz number during its first "Pops" concert series.

Stewart, whose "Rextet" opened last Monday at the Acquarium restaurant for a four-week stay, played "Boy Meets Horn", arranged for the 70-man orchestra by Brick Fleagle. His stint included a special cadenza lasting four minutes featuring a few tones never heard before on his half-valve cornet style of playing. He also paraded three original compositions featuring the "Rextet" alone — "Little Goose", "Jug Blues", and "Impromptu", described as a takeoff on a potpourri of bugle calls, standard tunes, and folk songs.

Sharing solo honors were trombonist-vocalist Henry Wells, alto saxist George Johnson, bassist Chocolate Williams, pianist Rufus Webster, drummer Bay Perry, and tenor saxist Pazuza Simon.

JOSEPHINE BAKER

Twic[illegible]old Tales About People You Know

By BIEL CHASE

The news of the recent illness of CATERINA JARBORO on the Coast brings to mind a reef of incidents in which the noted singer and last of the divas has figured. Few people have had a career as brilliantly studded as the girl from Wilmington, North Carolina who was to eventually rise from the ranks of a chorus girl to great heights as the toast of European opera houses. I can think of no other person who radiates the same kind of personal charm framed on a background of physical beauty, the least of whose assets is one of the most dazzling and ingratiating smiles that even, beautifully white teeth ever made possible.

Schooled and coached in the pure Italian idiom, Mme Jarboro is probably more a part of the Continental scene than she is that of the provincial American. Indeed, before World War II she was to Italy and France what Gladys Swarthout and Lily Pons are to the United States—perhaps more so. Had the Nazis not forced the Americans back to this side of the pond, it is extremely doubtful that the Diva would have returned permanetly to the place of her birth, America seemingly having shown no real appreciation for the Negro artist in opera.

But to get back to the point. Cateria is known, not only for her unusual sense of showmanship, but also for her knowledge of languages. While on a shopping tour of the had occasion once to differ with the better Eastside vegetable marts she Italian proprietor over the quality of certain merchandise. He let loose with such a valuable explosion of Italian as would have awaken Il Duce himself, had he not met his deserved Waterloo at the time of this incident. The Italian language happens to be one of Mme. arboro's fortes, and when she unleashed a verbal tirade of epithets in the academic and letter-perfect Italian, the likes of which the poor Italian had never before heard, he not only took low and ate humble pie, but insisted on presenting her with the finest and choicest products befitting a queen. That's Caterina Jarboro, who doesn't know the meaning of the word 'defeat".

Fabulous is the word for JOSEPHINE BAKER who has been the toast of the Continent for quite a spell now. Like so many other Negro performers, it remained for her to go to Paris before receiving the acclaim which was so rightly hers. And like so many of her fellow-passengers along the road, she, too, tasted of the bitter dose of disappointment on not being accepted by her own country because white America felt that years of prestige in Gay Paris had robbed her of her Negro heritage, or words to that general effect.

A few years ago the Winter Garden Theatre reeked with excitement as crowds lined up days in advance to see the latest edition of "Ziegfeld's Follies" in which Mlle. Baker was co-starred with the ample-nosed Miss Fannie Brice of Baby Snooks fame. Perhaps the trouble started when Josephine, gowned in the most breath-taking and expensive creations to come out of Paris, insisted on doing her dance routines with the help of four handsome, formally attired white male dancers. That, in itself, was enough to give the St. Louis-reared star the most unfavorable of reviews — reviews which eventually established the cafe au lait star as the flop-peroo of the season.

Whateverelse may have happened still isn't known, but rumors started flying thick and fast of a feud between the Misses Baker and Brice. Roi Ottley, the author of "New World A-Comin'," who was then theatrical editor of the Amsterdam News, sent me down to investigate on the premise that I had a fair knowledge of French and had known Miss Baker in France. After a great deal of waiting and red tape, I was finally ushered by a French maid into a beautifully appointed dressing room, heavily draped in satin from ceiling to floor, and generously sprinkled with white bear skins (they couldn't have been ermine). In answer to my query about the alleged feud, Mlle Josephine opened her eyes wide as if it were utterably ridiculous and this was the first time she had even heard of it.

"Why eet es all so stupeed," said the star of Folies Begere. "I theenk Mees Brice is a veer-e talented star and the most charmeeng people I have ever met!

Unable to get anymore from her on the subject, I descended to the next floor to get Miss Brice's version. Billy Rose (her better half in those days) opened the door and admitted me to a dressing room, although larger than Miss Baker, was sparcely decorated with faded chintz and altogether devoid of the glamor that characterized her Negro co-star's room. I posed a question or two about the rumor and Miss Brice just sat there, unmoved and in a very obvious bad humor, to put it mildly. Finally she asked me what had Miss Baker said about the situation.

"Miss Baker," I answered, "not only, only thinks you a very talented star, but considers you the most charming person she has ever met."

"Well, in that case," admitted Fannie, "I guess I feel the same way about her."

Auctioned for $253

indication. The occasion was a public auction to aid in the fund raising campaign to send food to Europe. The record was sold for "Tuxedo Junction" although less than ten years old has become a much sought after collector's item if the audience reaction at an auction on stage of the Strand Theatre here is any accurate way can be taken as any

Haw-kins, feeling a keen sympathy for the plight of the starving native land and therefore had a double interest in the acquisition of the record. Erskine, asked for permission to stage the auction

NEW YORK.—"Tuxedo Junction," the Erskine Hawkins-Bill Johnson-Jerry Gray-Sy Oliver arrangement of the Glenn Miller record, was auctioned off for $253 on the stage of the Strand theatre here Friday (13) as a benefit for the Russian War Relief.

About Josh White And Billy Holiday....

Journal & Guide

Two Stars Rank As Favorites Among White Nitery Patrons

Norfolk, Va.

Sat 3-16-46

By DON DeLEIGHBUR

NEW YORK—Two Negro musicians are assured of their places in the listening schedules and programs of most music-loving whites; that is, the whites who enjoy jazz and swing. One, Billie Holiday, will probably go down in the books as one of the popular music's all-time great artists; the other, Josh White, will undoubtedly be accepted as the king of the blues, although such a classification may be open to debate since there are many greater blues singers and players than Josh.

JOSH WHITE

DISTINCTIVE STYLES

However, Billie Holiday does something in her singing so odd that listeners become bewitched with her art and finally become fanatic addicts of her stylings.

Josh White's singing of the blues is singular in that what he leaves out become more important than what he plays and sings. That is what makes him distinctive among thousands of blues singers and guitarists. Today, Billie Holiday and Josh White are established firmly in New York's diadem of stars of the night clubs.

Without Billie Holiday in one of the several music rooms in 52nd street, the whole street, sometimes called Swing Lane, suffers.

Without Josh White at either Uptown or Downtown Cafe Society, Barney Josephson would feel it immediately, whether in receipts or in comment of his guests.

CARVED PLACE

Billie Holiday, Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis and Pete Johnson, plus Big Joe Turner, Teddy Wilson, Hazel Scott and Ida Cox are Cafe Society pioneers. Josh White came 'way late to be included in that class. But once arrived, Josh has carved a place for himself and today ranks as one of nightlife's greatest attractions. But Josh White outside of Cafe Society might not be so hot. He goes with Cafe Society. He has to have an audience that is sympathetic and willing to listen as he musically weaves the blue story of the Negro's soul. In the Zanzibar, Latin Quarter, or some of the "rubberneck" joints, Josh might presumably be lost.

Josh White's climb to fame has been on the vehicle of "social consciousness" singing in which he seeks through music to impress ideas of political thinking. "Social consciousness" in the theatre has been around for quite some time. Since the days of the old WPA when everything had to have "social consciousness" or it wasn't any good.

Sat 3-16-46

Remember such plays as "Sing for Your Supper?" "Sing Out Sweet Land?" "Stevedore?" Those were "social conscious" plays striving to effect a political reaction upon the playgoers.

BEGINS CLIMB

Josh White's New York introduction came via an album of recordings on Columbia under direction of John Hammond Jr., called "Chain Gang Blues." Supported by a quartet and with his guitar eloquently painting in the background of woe, trouble and rumors of woe, and with his voice singing in the plaintive, broken style of the canefield blues shouter gone citified as in church, Josh's climb up the ladder was thus began.

Josh White is from South Carolina—and I think he plans to remain from South Carolina. He is the usual Negro story of abject poverty during childhood, but also includes the factor of a badly cut right hand which might have forced him to a life of drudgery at menial labor and thus changed his whole outlook. But Josh seems to have been made of sterner stuff and surmounted the obstacle handily.

Dancer Breaks Racial Barrier at Exclusive New York School

Afro. American 3-30-46

Baltimore Md.

By GLADYS P. GRAHAM

NEW YORK (ANP)—A native of Kinston-Salem, N.C., and graduate of Radcliffe College and New York University with a major in the modern dance, Elizabeth Anne Ray has entered the exclusive Humphrey-Wiedman Terpsichorean School, situated in the heart of Gotham's theatrical center, where she is the first and only student of color.

MISS RAY

3-30-46

Interviewed in her decorative studio, Miss Ray stated that her mother, a master musician, had encouraged her creative dance ability at an early age. She indicated, however, that she really became inspired when she entered Radcliffe and was a pupil of Katherine Schoreder.

For three years she was a member of the Harcard Dance group which gave recitals in all of the New England colleges. She was the only colored member of this group which was organized on the basis of merit. 3-30-46

Miss Ray, who taught at Howard University and more recently as supervisor of recreation for colored government employees in Washington, is of the opinion that the field of modern dance is wide open for the serious artist.

Miss Ray concluded with the statement that young college students are most enthusiastic about the modern dance as a mode of expression and that well-informed, prepared teachers have a virgin field.

Tues 3-5-46

Massie Patterson will perform a group of Negro dances at the Harlem People's Art Group (IWO Lodge 691) concert at Elks Auditorium, 160 W. 129 St., next Sunday, March 10, 8:30 p.m. Other performers include Avon Long, Ismay Andrews and her Swa'hili Dancers, Eugenia Holmes, African songs and dances, and the Trinidad Trivialites. Abbie Mitchell will be Mistress of Ceremonies. Proceeds will aid the IWO Fraternal Center Building Fund.

Cootie Looks Up Former Teacher

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

MOBILE, Ala.—When Cootie Williams visited Mobile with his band recently, he paid a call on his first music instructor, Charles Lipscomb, who operates a pressing business, and still instructs promising youngsters on several instruments. Sat. 9-21-46

Williams is looked upon as the most illustrious pupil to have come under the Lipscomb tutelage.

BAND CRACKS GA. COLOR LINE

Courier, Pittsburgh Pa.

SAVANNAH, Ga.—Here in the "Wonder City," Raleigh Randolph, the "wizard of the strong bass," and his orchestra, billed as the "Band with the Atomic Swing," crashed the color line at the Bamboo night club. The policy of this swanky white club was to use white bands because here in the South there was no colored band that could please its aristocratic patrons.

3-16-46

Mike Tanner, operator of the Bamboo Club, stated last week that the music of Randolph's aggregation tops that of the white bands that have played the club in the past. He also stated that since the orchestra opened there last week he has had a large increase in patrons.

Frank A. Dilworth Jr., president of Dilworth Attractions, is responsible for the breaking of the color bar at the Bamboo and is the same booker who crashed the color lines before the duration with such aggregations as the Cats and a Fiddle, Earl Hines, 'Bama State Collegians, and Edith Curry.

Raleigh Randolph co-stars Michael Graham, "Georgia's Glamour Boy," who gave over 300 voluntary performances for the GIs during the war and appeared on benefits with Louis Jordan, Red Caps, and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. He is rated as "America's Greatest Comic Novelist."

The orchestra features the vocals of Bee Payne, who sings in a self styled manner. Jimmie Lenoir is the featured sideman and tenor saxophonist.

Starpickers

TO THE EDITOR: We have an interracial fan club called "Starpickers." Anyone, no matter what race, can belong. We back up-and-coming stars. Our president, Mabel Fairley *(above)*, could become a star herself.

ROBERT STOVALL, Sec.
San Francisco Junior College
San Francisco, Cal.

Cootie Playing Exclusive White Club In South

Amsterdam News New York, N.Y.

Sat 9-7-46

MYRTLE BEACH, S. C. — The first time in the history of this famed resort that a colored band was engaged to play for the management of the ultra swank hotel was so pleased with the music and behavior of the Cootie Williams band that they accorded three million dollar establishment built every member complete privileges on the Atlantic Ocean and is one of the resort. The bandsmen were of America's finest resorts catering only to the wealthiest families given rooms in the hotel. They were also invited to swim on the beach and mingle with the guests.

Cootie's appearance at the Forest Hotel, Myrtle Beach, S. C., marked the first time in the history of this famed resort that a colored growl trumpet of Cootie Williams blew over another tradition this week when on August 27 he opened with his famous band.

The Ocean Forest Hotel is a three million dollar establishment built on the Atlantic Ocean and is one of America's finest resorts catering only to the wealthiest families of the South.

66c 1946

Ice Skating (Mabel Fairbanks)

Mabel Fairbanks Off to Hollywood; Thrilled at Getting First "Break"

Baltimore, Md.
Afro-American
1-26-46

NEW YORK (CNS).—It all happened so suddenly, they haven't ever had time to pack. For, after two years of being refused in white ice show productions because the producers feared she would steal the show, Mabel Fairbanks is at last on her way to Hollywood.

Leaving on an appropriate train for the occasion, "The Trail Blazer," Mabel and her coach, Wally Hunter, stopped in Chicago for three days for an exhibition before catching the Santa Fe on to the coast. Once there, Mabel will be whisked into rehearsal for a grand affair staged in a Los Angeles arena.

SKATING STAR IN CHICAGO

CHICAGO.—Mabel Fairbanks, skating star, and her manager, Wally Hunter, left here Sunday on the last leg of their trip to Hollywood, where Miss Fairbanks will fulfill commitments with Irene West, writer-producer.

Sponsored by AFRO Columnist

All details are being handled by Irene West, the world traveler and writer for the AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS, who has been deeply interested in Mabel since she came to New York and saw the skater perform along with a bunch of professional white skaters. 1-26-46

Miss West yelled "stop, stop" —you're much too good to be skating with those amateurs." And right away the two began working together until Miss West returned to the coast to begin angling for backers to sponsor Mabel Fairbanks at an arena. 1-26-46

Gets Press's Support

At first, she met with great difficulty. People wouldn't believe there was a colored girl, only 20, who could skate like Sonja Henie. But that didn't stop Irene West.

She went right to the Los Angeles Sentinel and requested that they print her story. The next week's editions said that financial backing was being sought to bring the skater to Los Angeles. The next day Miss West got calls.

Taught Mabel Hula Routine

From California, they expect to tour Canada and Mexico and perhaps even Europe before being recognized in New York, where they originally began. However, full credit is due Mabel's stern coach, Wally Hunter, who is responsible for making Mabel "toe the line" when it came to spins, splits and twirls. He boasts that Mabel can do a better axel than anyone in the business. 1-26-46

MABEL FAIRBANKS,
who, although is shown doing a difficult skating number, could easily be expressing joy over the "break" Irene West has given her in Hollywood, where she will be featured in an affair in a Los Angeles arena after New York's race prejudice has kept her out of the spotlight.

While here, Miss West arranged a complete hula skirt and accessories which are absolutely authentic. Miss West, who has a home in Honolulu, is an expert on the native dance and taught Mabel the routine as a dance before she began skating to it. She was the first person to introduce hula dancers to American audiences.

Sponsor Ill; Ice Maker Stalls But Fairbanks's Show Goes On

Afro-American
Sat 1-6-46
Baltimore, Md.

LOS ANGELES (CNS) — Amid confusion, much of it resulting from all those unheided of situations that occur behind the cur- Fairbanks, considered the world's greatest colored ice-skater, made her west coast debut at the Lincoln Theatre.

The one-week engagement met terrific success, though it hit many snags. To begin with, Irene West, author and sponsor of Miss Fairbanks, became ill just at the debut was shaping up and it left most of the work on Wally Hunter, Miss Fairbanks' coach.

Then on pening night. the newly rented ice machine broke down and Mabel and her supporting skaters were just about skating on pipes. But by Sunday, they had ice three inches deep right on the Lincoln stage.

Another unque thing was the fact that the Fairbanks show brought people to the Lincoln Theatre who hadn't been there in five years, probably due to a bad name the house received from seating former shows.

Miss Fairbanks, however, received a real Hollywood welcome. There were big flood lights all over the city and banners for two blocks was in lights with banners all around it.

Skater

Mable Fairbanks Is Feted Gloriously In Hollywood

The Sentinel
Sat 1-23-46

BY WALLY HUNTER, COOCH TO MABEL FAIRBANKS

LOS ANGELES — (Calvin's News Service) .. Ever since Mabel and I hit this town last week, they have been carrying us like a house of fire. You would think they had never seen an iceskater before. (Maybe they haven't.) Anyway, all the papers covered our coming and we felt very welcome.

The town has been guesting us to death every day. Sunday we were in Pasadena, Calif., the guests of Edith Spencer, a great name in show business a few years ago.

And what a home she has. Like everybody else, she has a car and we've been riding in it.

In Pasadena, however, we had two unpleasant experiences. 1st. we were refused service at Robert's Restaurant. In our group were Irene West, Mabel's sponsor who invited us to the coast; Earl Peterson (both white.) Mabel and myself. They wouldn't serve us.

Then at the Pasadena Ice Rink, the manager had to preach a sermon before letting us in. He told us that while he had no objection to our going in, that he was afraid some white skater would cut Mabel up—that California wasn't like other states. And therefore, for the good of Mabel's career he wanted to warn us against our going in and permitting Mabel to skate.

Of course, we gave him the horse laugh. Not only did we go in, and not only did Mabel skate, but the only didn't any of the skaters hurt her, but the little white kids ate her up, and the larger white skaters stood against the rail while Mabel went to town. Many of the skaters wanted to take lessons from her. Sat 2-23-46

And was the manager's face red? Among other things, he had told us that once a colored kid came up to get his reaction, and he was not man enough to face us.

Monday night Mabel Fairbanks and Co. (meaning Mabel and I) were invited to the Monday Night Celebrity Hour of the Los Angeles Orpheum Theatre. Eddie Heywood's orchestra was on the bill. We went in a group. But when we got there, Mabel became such a big shot that he couldn't be seated with her!

They put Mabel in one of the special guest boxes. In her box was Marilynn Maxwell, with Van Johnson. I was at Mabel's being up there with all those movie stars, I couldn't get all their names. Many actors were and several actors and all the leading stars "Prison Ship."

Now, with the above set-up of stars, who do you think was the honored star and first one to be introduced? Well, I was our own Mabel—introduced as "the world's greatest Negro ice skater—just in from New York to make a picture in Hollywood."

Well, you guessed it—I almost jumped out of my seat when this happened. And Irene West almost cried—she was so happy. So you see, this far, we came and saw, and we conquered!

66c 1946 Ice Skating (Holquina "Lucky" Peterson)

CINDERELLA OF THE ICE: Holquina "Lucky" Peterson, 18-year-old Brooklyn girl who was found skating for fun is now one of the stars of the Iceland Restaurant Ice Show, at 52nd St. and Broadway. Cracking Broadway's ban against interracial choruses, she takes her place among the rest of the girls and is well liked by the cast and uproariously applauded by the audience. That is "Lucky" at the extreme left. The blonde girl in the light costume is "Babe" Voorhis, "Lucky's" side-kick. (See page 15 for story, center fold for other pictures).—Rapid Fotos.

Singing With Annie

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

Sat. 7-27-46

John Garth, 3rd, Leon Bibb and Clyde Turner, left to right, caught by the photographer while singing with Ethel Merman in the new Irving Berlin musical, "Annie Get Your Gun," at New York's Imperial. Miss Merman portrays Annie Oakley in the production.

Dick Huey Quits 'Bloomer Girl'

Tells Of Hardships, Race Encounters

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 11-30-46 66c

NEW YORK—(ANP)—How does it feel to be a stellar member of a big-time Broadway musical—one of those mixed shows which feature colored stars? was the question popped to Richard Huey, jovial, bulging comedian-singer, who has jut quit "Bloomer Girl" after staying with the original company for its entire Broadway run and going with the road show as far as the coast.

"You get sick and tired of singing the same song every night—sometimes twice a day—not counting the encores. And when you had a song like the one I had, well, it became a nightmare and haunted me all through my sleep.

"Being on the road as a colored member of a white show is no fun. They still aren't civilized in some sections of the country and regard colored performers more or less as freaks.

"Separate accommodations—with notoriously bad hotels for colored folk—bad food—broken rest—all add up to a perfectly miserable time, unless you actually love the theatre.

"That's why it is difficult to get many colored stars to travel out of New York. With the exception of Detroit, Chicago and perhaps one or two other towns, there aren't any decent hotels worthy of the name for colored travelers. They all know how to charge, but they don't know what to give you for what they charge. Their prices are on a level with those of the finer Broadway hotels."

SO AC JUNE 1946
RECORDS & RESEARCH DEPT
NEGRO INSTITUTE ALA

66c

Bill Callahan (in the air), Lawrence Winters (on the valise), Betty Garrett, and the "Senators from the South," Harry Clark, Jules Munshin and George Hall of "Call Me Mister," a revue, at the National, Thurs

* 4-14-46 New York Times, New York, N.Y. 4-14-46 Sunday

'CIVVIES'—WITH MUSIC

New York, N.Y.

'Call Me Mister' Is a GI Celebration of Peace and Homecoming

New York Times

By MELVYN DOUGLAS

IF the custom of dedicating books were generally practiced with respect to theatrical attractions, I think the musical revue that Herman Levin and I are bringing to the National Theatre Thursday would appropriately be dedicated to Ernie Pyle. We've tried, in putting "Call Me Mister" together, to interpret the joys and tribulations of GI Joes as they become ex-GI's, with the same affection, understanding and humor that Pyle put into his reports of them when they were fighting.

This may sound ambitious for a musical revue where the accent must always be on light entertainment. But I dare to make comparison with Pyle because our intent, at least, has been to match his honesty and humanity in reflecting the confidence, earnestness, decency and proud faith of Americans back from the war.

If this gives the impression that "Call Me Mister" is a serious survey of the ex-GI's outlook in an admittedly troubled post-war period, I ought to tear up my words and eat them syllable by syllable. Perhaps, however, they can stand, with this emphasized addition:

Optimistic Americans

Sun,

I believe that the dominant spirit of America has always been optimism. It was Ernie Pyle's genius to find this spirit among homesick men who were facing death in battle and thus had least reason to feel it. With our show it has been easier to find that spirit, for the almost strangling joy of homecoming has been all around us in this year of victory and demobilization. In Harold Rome's songs, such as "This Is a Going-Home Train," "That Man of Mine Is Home Again" and "Call Me Mister"; in Arnold Auerbach's sketches the mood is all jubilant and optimistic. That's as it should be, because that's the way the GI's are, and their friends and families too, as they don their civvies again.

I like to think that Pyle would have liked the title of our show, as a sort of summary of the simple gladness of service men to be all equal Misters again. That title is perhaps a key to the show. It's cocky and debonair in the midst of post-war problems. It's on the level of happiness in the small things that represent big things.

"Call Me Mister" happens to be no post-war, between-pictures whim of mine. The notion of putting such a show was cooking in my mind for some time. I mean "cooking" literally. For it wasn't exactly chilly in the China-Burma-India theatre of war where the notion began during the two years that I directed the Army's Entertainment Production Unit there.

Not Quite Broadway

This unit had the job of providing theatrical entertainment for troops throughout the huge CBI "circuit." I'll admit that our shows were often a trifle under Broadway standards. After all, we weren't on Broadway, but in the jungles a lot of the time. Our audience wasn't a Broadway audience, but a cross-section of America and it didn't prize subtlety and polish as much as the release of good boisterous laughter.

We found we were giving our public what it wanted when we put on variety shows that lived up to such titles, in quality and content, as "Babes in Boyland." We found that out in the shrieking approval of the million or so spectators who saw our 1300 performances—given sometimes on captured Jap trailers in a clearing of a jungle, sometimes in tiny mountain outposts or hospital wards,

sometimes in elaborate camp theatres at mammoth debarkation centers. 4-14-46

All the same, here and there I began to notice a lot of fine material that could stand up with the best that Broadway ever offered. Among our soldier-actors and directors genuine talent reared its head from time to time. And the "packaged" written material for our shows that came out to us from the Army's Special Service Entertainment Branch "factory" in New York was often brilliant. Among the great stream of plays, skits, songs, minstrel shows, vaudeville and revues sent out in mimeographed form to Army entertainment units like mine all over the world I took particular notice of the songs by Corp. Harold J. Rome and the sketches by Sgt. Arnold Auerbach.

And so the idea for "Call Me Mister" was born. When the war's over, I said to myself, I'll look these fellows up and see about their writing a show that won't be just for and about soldiers, but for everybody.

Joining Forces

The war ended while I was on a leave in New York to collect more material for my entertainment unit. I had an appointment in the Special Services "factory" on the day the world waited for news of the Jap surrender. Meeting Rome and Auerbach that day, we naturally tended to talk less of continued entertainment needs in Asia than of prospects in the peace. It was the psychological moment to talk aloud at last about one's tentative plans for a civilian future. The idea, that had been cooking with me in India for a show about the greatest homecoming in history, popped out. It developed that Rome and Auerbach had been cooking up a similar idea, basting and stirring it with Herman Levin, who has been Rome's fiscal and managerial adviser for a considerable time. It was an inevitable next step for people with such identical notions to join forces in order to put the notions into motions. Under a neatly abbreviated corporation name of the D. & L. Company, Levin and I affiliated ourselves to produce the show that Rome and Auerbach sat down to write.

One of the first steps we agreed upon was that a show about returned service men should also be with them. And so it has turned out. Every man in the cast has been in the service, and so have all the staff of directors, the scene designer and so forth. And also all the lovely girls in the show have proud records of having either been in one of the services, or of having entertained in USO shows, at hospitals or canteens.

As this aspect of the show got to be known, people began to think of it as an Army show, or one given for some cause or other. This we want to disclaim. "Call Me Mister" is a strictly commercial venture, with the proceeds going to the relief and benefit only of those associated in the production, not forgetting Herman Levin and me.

On Discs:

You Can 'Call Me Mister'

F.M. New York, N.Y.

By SEYMOUR PECK

Three new albums of music from Broadway shows have just come out: Sun 6-30-46

CALL ME MISTER (Decca, five ten inch discs, $4.46): Composer Harold Rome has a way of catching history on the move, of getting good, popular, Tin Pan Alley songs out of seemingly ponderous subjects like war, fascism, reconversion, unemployment, military life. In the '30s he came to fame by kidding the world in *Pins and Needles;* now in the '40s he has again brought the spirit of the times to a Broadway musical, *Call Me Mister.*

Call Me Mister centers about the men who went to war, their homecoming and the people they come home to. A soldier sings to his wife a melodic ballad, *Along With Me,* telling her how she was always with him even when there were oceans between them. Another happy ex-GI tells everyone to call him mister and to "fix it so they're all called mister from now on."

Then there is *Military Life,* a brassy, John Philip Sousa kind of tune, kidding the Army, debunking particularly the notion that the Army Builds Men. All these are in Decca's well-recorded album, sung attractively by Paula Bane, Danny Scholl, Bill Callahan and other members of the Broadway cast. Heading the roster are Betty Garrett and Lawrence Winters. Winters' powerful baritone makes the most of three fine numbers—*Going Home Train, Red Ball Express* and *The Face on the Shiny New Dime,* a song about FDR. Sun 6-2-46

And Miss Garrett, *Call Me Mister's* wonderful comedienne, tops off the proceedings with three ditties, notably the delightful lament about the overworked canteen hostess who is getting a dislocated spine from too many sambas, rhumbas and congas.

THE HORIZON

"Call Me Mister" Is Subtle, Potent Blow Against Detractors Of Melvin Douglas—and Me

By P. L. PRATTIS

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 7-6-46

THIS week I would commend to you both the talent and temper of Melvyn Douglas, the screen star and co-producer of "Call Me Mister," current Broadway hit musical revue. Of the talent of many persons we are assured, but we are not ever too sure that some of them have the temper, once stung, to put their talent to work. There need be no doubt about Mr. Douglas. A few years ago, during the war, the reactionaries and isolationists in the Nation's Capitol threw the book at Mr. Douglas and his wife, Helen Gan-agan Douglas, just because they were friends of Mrs. Roosevelt and just because . . . you know that one. Mr. Douglas must have got mad. He went off and joined the Army as a private and now he has returned, a retired lieutenant colonel, to show the guys who threw rocks at him and Congresswoman Douglas that he can throw rocks, too.

Mr. Prattis

I do not intend this piece as a review of the show for which Mr. Douglas is in large part responsible. Rather, it is my purpose to emphasize that if any progress is to be made in fighting off racial hate mongers in this country, it is going to be necessary for those who believe in true democracy to become aroused to the point of anger and, in fighting mood, put their best talent to work. I guess what I am trying to say is that when we feel a sense of ourtage because of the machinations of men like Bilbo and Rankin, we should call upon our brains to help us, that our anger should press our brains into service.

• • •

I MAY be wrong, but it seems to me that is just what has happened in the case of Mr. Douglas. I can imagine him passing sleepless nights when his enemies had him where he could not answer back. I can picture him in Jovian indignation, suffering their slurs and insults until that day should come when he might hurl a thunderbolt back at them. I am sure that all through the war he was busy forging this thunderbolt to be ready to cast it at the first opportunity.

"I am determined," Mr. Douglas must have said to himself, "to make some people in America see and confess how silly and simple they are. I shall show them how bare their hearts are of kindness, how bereft their minds of a sense of decency and fair play. I'll put it in such a way that they can neither duck nor deny it. In the middle of a belly laugh, I'll make them acknowledge, 'He's talking about me.' I'll expose them to themselves and shake them. And then for those others too blind and dull to see or understand, I'll reserve the acid of high ridicule. Their fellows shall laugh at them and scorn them. They will come to feel strange and unwanted. And it shall come to pass that all of them shall ask 'Why did he this to me?'" Sat. 7-6-46

Lest you be misled, I must note that "Call Me Mister" is not a "race play" in the ordinary sense. It is a musical in which men and women, formerly in the Army and Navy, come together to sing of their great joy that the war should be over and that they should be released from military red tape to return to civilian life. They don't want to be called corporal, sergeant, even lientenant. They want to be called mister.

• • •

THAT IS point enough in itself for a good show, but apparently the angry Mr. Douglas was not satisfied. He would mix castor oil with his sarsaparilla. Thus it is that he takes issue with those who would depress the minority groups of this Nation and rob them of not only their birthright, but also their opportunities.

Maybe there's something sadist about it, but I think I like his work because he hurts our enemies most while they're laughing their loudest. Like Joe Louis he believes a smile on the face of an opponent is best erased by a stiff left jab.

I'd be willing to bet that sometimes while he was getting up this show, he must have laughed to himself and said: "I'll have this blade between their ribs before they have a chance to feel it." "Call Me Mister" is just that subtle and potent.

When the show comes to your town, don't fail to see it. You'll learn from it a lot about the tactics of counter attack in race relations.

If Luck Is With You Get Tickets To 'Call Me Mister'

Defender Chicago, Ill. 6c

Sat. 12-7-46

By JOHN LOVELL JR.

NEW YORK—When you go to Theatreville (New York) and try to get in to see the best show you can't possibly get into, that show is likely to be "Call Me Mister." Its songs, dances, meaty lines, timeliness, girliosity are all topgrade, and so recognized. And it has one thing none of the other big Broadway smashes can claim—a spirit of open, fiery democracy.

Oh yes, "The State Of The Union" and "Born Yesterday" are "about" democracy and how it works in America. But "Call Me Mister" IS democracy. It has interracial, intersectional performers with one of the minority members singing from the top rung.

Go backstage and you'll see the why of all this. The cast is proud of its liberalism, as a whole and as individual people. Fighting for simple American rights may not be good business for us as professional actors, they will tell you, but it's only fair; it's what we believe in; and we're willing to stand or fall right there.

But it is good business, as the owners of the show, Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin, will tell you in a minute. They were out to make money, among other things, and they decided to invest in just this type of a show. "The Red Ball Express" number shows how Negro truck drivers wrote the most colorful pages in the history of the Battle of the Bulge, only to get home and be slighted when regular truck drivers are hired. The "South Wind" number is the most penetrating knifing of Bilboism and Rankinism now extant. But they're both sharp entertainment. People love it. The show is making plenty of money.

This is not the first time Harold Rome, who wrote the words and the music for "Call Me Mister," has played on this kind of a team. A few years ago he wrote "Pins And Needles" which showed America a thing or two about its incongruous racial and economic policies. A little later, he introduced into his "Sing Out The News" the memorable "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones" sequence that one, in all its refreshing social significance on a delightful racial theme, has gone around the world and back.

When Douglas and his selection board were choosing people for the show, they sent out word: we want ex-GI's and ex-USO performers, period. Several people called in to ask—does that mean ANY kind, any kind at all? The answer was yes, that's just what it means. We're taking the best and we don't care if the show ends up all white, all dark, or in-between.

It ended up in-between. From competition, they are going to be 1200 aspirants in the tryouts of heard from plenty in the future. which about one per cent were Negro, 60 artists were selected, of which three are Negroes. They were Bruce Howard, Alvin Tinnin, and Laurence Winters, who is sometimes known as Laurence Whisonant. They aren't treated the least bit differently from anyone else. It isn't even remarkable that they are Negroes, so far as the show goes. But you ought to know about them for having ridden such

PHILADELPHIA BOUND: Lawrence Winters and Bruce Howard, who have leading roles in "Call Me Mister," a new musical revue scheduled to open at Philadelphia's Forrest Theatre March 18.

'CALL ME MISTER'

A Group of Former Service Men and Women in a Cheerful Revue

By LEWIS NICHOLS

ALONG with baseball and the flowers, "Call Me Mister" may be added to the list of the welcome features of the current spring. Written and performed by those just released from the services, it opened a little over a week ago to give Broadway an unexpected Easter present. It is cheerful and unpretentious. It does not aim its destiny at the stars, nor does it give employment to stars of the other, more earthbound, order. It is content to mock gently some of the things in the Army, and some of the things outside, and to sing vigorously about many matters including both love and the samba. It is, in short, a revue. It is not alone a service men's revue set forth for a specialized audience, however, for the young ladies and gentlemen of the cast are standing on their own feet without outside or audience help. The job of reconversion has been complete, and "Call Me Mister" is engaging entertainment quite aside from its origins.

Those origins, as is generally known by now, go back to the CBI theatre of war operations, when Melvyn Douglas, once of Hollywood and lately of the Army, believed there might be a show about the returning service men. Herman Levin, a local attorney, had the same idea, and so the forces united. Arnold Auerbach thought up some sketches, Harold Rome began fiddling with the piano and various other artisans were called upon for talent or material. Everyone connected with the show served at one time with the armed forces or auxiliaries, or at least were the energetic Eileens with whom all hearts were left at the Stage Door Canteen. "Call Me Mister" can match battle stars with anyone, although that isn't the idea. In fact, the revue's first song, and endless pronouncements by Mr. Douglas, point out that it is strictly a commercial venture. The Misters and Misses like jobs in the working theatre, and the producers, themselves, are not fearful of tax payments.

Sketches Up and Down

Like racing, bricklaying and drama criticism, "Call Me Mister" is a little uneven, and curiously enough, it is at its best when not eyeing the above point of origin. Generally speaking, the first part of the show tells the viewpoint of the services—how Army red tape would defeat Paul Revere, and the like—and the sketches are not as funny as others from military pens and archives. When "Call Me Mister" definitely has reached home, however, there can be no possible complaint. The second half all but throws the uniform away, and carries on as a plain citizen with grievances against certain Senators of the South and with prejudices against lower Caribbean dances. The second half, in other words, is when the ranking comedian may imitate Maurice Evans and say something about "New Yorick, I knew him well." That is called being home with an honorable discharge; and it also is called being a comedian in a Broadway revue. Whatever the value of the line, if any, it does mark the difference between Special Services and crass professional commerce.

Mr. Rome's Music

Mr. Rome's songs are likable, which is the general over-all quality of the revue as a whole. Having once written the excellent "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones," Mr. Rome has hoped to continue the mood with the current "The Face on the Dime." This has a nice idea—that all the greatest men are pictured on the smallest money—but unfortunately the tune is not up to the plan. With fifteen additional chances, however, Mr. Rome generally has been successful. There are love songs and songs of satire, and those like "Goin' Home Train" and "The Red Ball Express," which are stirring. As his own lyricist, the composer is simple, easy and literate. The sketches by Arnold Auerbach have their ups and downs. One about how not to welcome the service man is pretty dreary; that about a GI's view of the Army Air Forces—a view taken from Hollywood's interpretation—is very funny.

But while material is important, any revue rises or falls with the temperature of its performers. The Misters and their sisters at the National are willing to break their necks in order to keep the show moving. Betty Garrett is the chief performer, playing in sketches and singing songs and being completely satisfactory as a lady of all work. Jules Munshin, who was in "The Army Play by Play" a couple of years ago, is the chief comedian of the revue, and a good one. Lawrence Winters sings Mr. Rome's more serious songs, and Danny School and Paula Bane sing his softer ones. There are a great many other attractive people in the cast, and the John Wray dances and Robert H. Gordon's direction stress their attractiveness. Here, then, is a group of young people, putting on a show and having a wonderful time at it. Its members offer enthusiasm in addition to talent—and it is not only because they are glad to be home again. They also are glad to be back in the theatre, and judging from the reception, the feeling is not one-sided.

All Thumbs Are Up For 'Call Me Mister

Howard Barnes, *Herald Tribune*: ". . . a captivating show. It brightens the waning season no end."

Robert Coleman, *Mirror*: ". . . a breezy, fresh, chuckle-provoking, tuneful hit."

John Chapman, *News*: "I call it grand. The show seems to be the only postwar project which has really got going."

Lewis Nichols, *Times*: ". . . one of the cheerful musicals of the year. As composer, Harold Rome is one of the heroes of the evening."

Robert Garland, *Journal-American*: ". . . has everything it takes to make a grand night of theater-going."

Vernon Rice, *Post*: ". . . a touch of pathos, a good portion of laughter mixed with pleasant sights and sounds, timely appeal and youthful high spirits."

Ward Morehouse, *Sun*: "A really good musical . . . a quick, trim, zestfully performed revue."

William Hawkins, *World-Telegram*: ". . . of all its listed numbers not one is bad. Nor is there a fumbling member of the cast."

GI Joe Comes Home in Style

PM Reviews

CALL ME MISTER, a new revue presented by Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin at the National; music and lyrics by Harold Rome; sketches by Arnold Auerbach and Arnold B. Horwitt; with Betty Garrett, Jules Munshin, Bill Callahan, Harry Clark, George Hall, Lawrence Winters, Maria Karnilova, David Nillo, Chandler Cowles, Betty Lou Holland, Danny Scholl, Paula Bane and others; staged by Robert H. Gordon; dances by John Wray; musical direction by Lehman Engel; scenery by Lester Polakov; costumes by Grace Houston.

It required a war to give Broadway its first really satisfactory musical of the season. *Call Me Mister* has assembled a bunch of former GIs and WACs and camp-show entertainers in a gay, springy, youthful revue—one of those things you sit through with relish and leave with regret. A kind of valedictory to Selective Service, *Call Me Mister* is also a salute to Spring.

It is, to be sure, anything but a perfect show. It sometimes bumps as well as bounces; many of its sketches were thought up with more wit than they were thought through; some of its dialogue needs more expert performers to give it punch; some of its tunes are a little too reminiscent. But the weaknesses of *Call Me Mister* are as easily understood as they are forgiven, are bound up with its youthfulness and informality. And they are more than offset, not only by the prevailingly pleasant tone, but by the high points of the evening, which are really high.

Concerned in the loosest way with the GI's return to civilian life, *Call Me Mister* spanks along, now sentimental, now satirical, now glancing back, now looking ahead, sometimes just taking its fun where it finds it. Joe dreams from overseas about the corner drugstore; parents who have read too many alarming magazine articles welcome Joe home as though he were a man with two heads; waitresses sigh for the days of uniforms; the housing shortage comes in for mention, and Army red tape for razzing. These things push the show along, but better things make it pop. If Harold Rome's tunes are seldom more than agreeable, his lyrics are the season's merriest, and the makings of such amusing ditties as *Military Life* and *Yuletide, Park Avenue*.

Then there is at least one extremely funny skit, fleshing an infantryman's idea of how the Air Corps lived—all Hollywood luxury and Mayfair toniness. And in *South America, Take It Away*, Betty Garrett, as a canteen hostess half dead and half disjointed from dancing rhumbas and sambas, deservedly brings down the house.

With her looks, voice and comedy gifts, Miss Garrett is very much of an asset to *Call Me Mister*. As the chief male comic, Jules Munshin cavorts indefatigably and with a good deal of brightness. There's a lot of fast, straight-Broadway dancing, including tap. The best of the songs, *Going Home Train*, is a very effective sort of choral blues; several other serious and sentimental songs are very well sung by Lawrence Winters. The orchestra plays with zip, and the show moves along with dispatch. Beyond its gaiety, it has a kind of decency and no mind for dirt. There are certainly things wrong with *Call Me Mister*, but I don't see how anyone can fail to like it.

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Sun, Call Me Mister, the musical hit at the National, will chalk up its 300th performance on Thursday.

THE PLAY

New York Times

'Call Me Mister,' Revue by Former Service Men, Is One of the Cheerful Musicals of the Year

N.Y. N.Y.

CALL ME MISTER, a revue in two acts and twenty-three scenes. Music and lyrics by Harold Rome; sketches by Arnold Auerbach. Directed by Robert H. Gordon; dances by John Wray; musical direction by Lehman Engel; scenery by Lester Polakov; costumes by Grace Houston; produced by Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin. At the National Theatre.

PRINCIPALS—Betty Garrett, Jules Munshin, Lawrence Winters, Maria Karnilova, Paula Bane, Bill Callahan, Alan Manson, David Nillo, George Hall, Danny Scholl, George Irving, Glenn Turnbull and others.

By LEWIS NICHOLS

4-8-46

The former service men and the young ladies who came in with them obviously are glad to be back—and the theatre this morning should be glad to have them. "Call Me Mister," which Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin offered at the National last evening, is one of the cheerful musicals of the year. Its cast and contributors are either late GI or those who entertained them by way of USO, and its spirit is youth. In addition to winning a war or two, the Army and the Navy seem to have kept the interests of the theatre at heart, and peace on Forty-first Street is equally successful. "Call Me Mister" could be named with justice "Call Me Colonel," if rank still held—but everyone takes particular pains to say it doesn't. 4-20-46

* * *

The show is in the form of a revue, and somewhere in its origins there must have been a thread about demobilization. Being intelligent people, those responsible quickly cut the thread and go on to have a brisk and merry time with whatever comes to hand. There are sketches about homecoming, songs about the corner drug store and the waitress who now is "surplus"; but South America also is urged to take back the conga, and certain Southern Senators are urged to behave themselves. In "Call Me Mister" are all moods—the satiric, the sentimental, patriotic, matter-of-fact. And acting the moods are Misters and Misses of fresh and engaging talent.

Since not even the Army did everything right the first time and throughout, some of the revue gets a little lost now and then. A few of the early sketches quietly dig into foxholes, from which not even the energy of the cast can move them. When he has pulled himself together, however, Arnold Auerbach, who wrote them—twice with Arnold B. Horwitt as collaborator—can turn out funny material. The GI's opinion of the Air Force is a satirical matter of champagne, Noel Coward accent and high rank—and let the Air Force sue. The conversation of three Southern Senators, one named Burple, which must be a misprint, is in the best manner of political satire. "Once Over Lightly," about a barber and two ex-GI's, could go in any slapstick revue or burlesque. Sat.

* * *

As composer, Harold Rome is one of the heroes of the evening. He has perhaps not written his greatest song for the show, but he has made them singable and light and in the mood of "Call Me Mister." One number, called "Goin' Home Train," seems to have the rhythm of cars homeward bound. "Surplus Blues," about the waitress who frankly misses the Army wolves, is cheerful; a love song, "Along With Me," is good of its type. Continuing the scheme of his earlier "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones," Mr. Rome now offers "The Face on the Dime," which has a good idea and lyric but fails to be as stirring as the other. "The Red Ball Express," telling of truck drivers in Normandy, is excellent.

But, Mr. Rome aside, it is the people's show. Betty Garrett is the only featured player, a distinction she deserves. She can sing a song clearly and can act comedy character parts as well as just comedy. Jules Munshin, a Bert Lahresque figure, also supplies comedy, as do Harry Clark and George Hall. For a young couple who can dance engagingly, the show offers Betty Lou Holland and Bill Callahan; for a young couple who can sing, Danny Scholl and Paula Bane. Lawrence Winters is an excellent soloist for the "Goin' Home Train," "The Red Ball Express" and "The Face on the Dime." John Wray has designed dances which are lively without being complicated, and the entire cast knows what to do about them. Lester Polakov's settings are simple, Grace Houston's costumes youthful. In sum, "Call Me Mister" is an engaging revue and a credit to Selective Service.

From the Army to B'way

Daily Worker, New York, 10/24.

By BETH McHENRY

LAWRENCE WINTERS, the gifted baritone, who has a leading role in **Call Me Mister**, calls this new musical one of the finest vehicles of democracy he has ever seen on Broadway.

Lawrence Winters sings one of the great songs of the show, "The Red Ball Express" number. He likes it a lot, thinks it is subtle and effective propaganda against jimcrow.

Winters met up with some pretty pointed jimcrow during his Army days. He enlisted back in 1942 because he felt that he should, he said. The first thing he knew, he was on his way to Tampa, Florida, for one of the most disgusting experiences of his life. Mon. 5.6.46

Winters, whose rapid trip up the star trail was interrupted by a two and a half year stretch in the Army, talked to us backstage at the National Theatre. Outside his dressing room, passing members of the cast sent their voices up and down the scales, loosening up for the show. Winters smiled, listening, and said, "The gang in this show are real people; it makes working here okay."

"If you want to get a story on the treatment of Negroes in this country," he said, "just go down there to Tampa, Florida. As soldiers, other Negroes and myself were subjected to some pretty sharp lessons on the state of our democracy."

ARMY JIMCROW

LEFT DEEP IMPRESSION

Later Lawrence Winters was sent to Camp Huachuca, in Arizona, where, although at times there were as many as 40,000 Negro enlisted men, there was only one high ranking Negro officer in the entire post. These Army experiences left a deep impression on Winters.

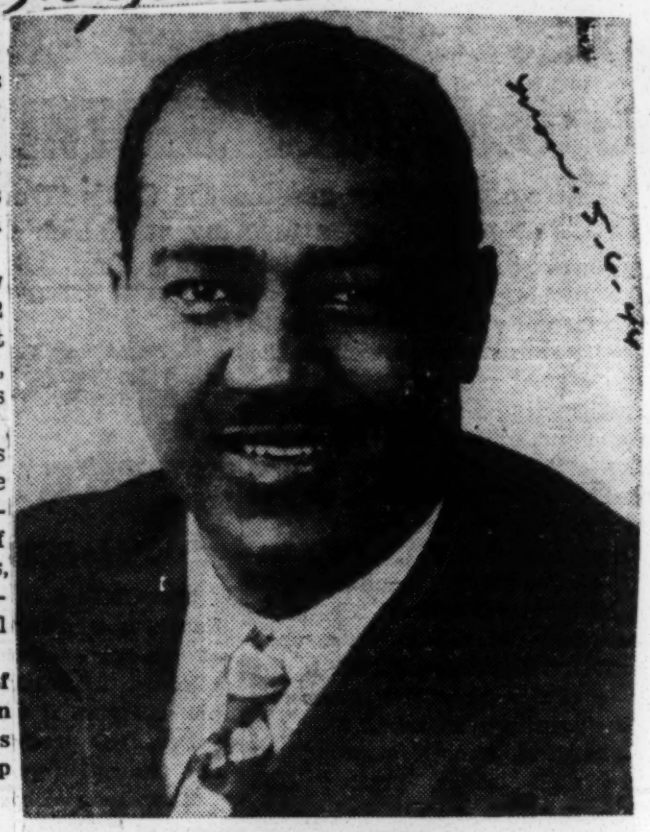
"Of course," the singer told us, "I was born in the South, in rural South Carolina, and these things weren't new to me. But somehow, meeting up with this intense discrimination when you're in uniform to defend your country, it makes you do a lot of thinking." Mon. 5.6.46

Winters was born into the family of a railroad fireman, the fourth child of six. He said they moved about, going wherever the father's work took him. He finished high school in Salisbury, North Carolina, and went along to Washington to enter Howard University at the age of 16. He had it in mind to study law, but a teacher persuaded him that his bent was music, and he has been grateful to her for it. Although he matriculated in 1935, he did not graduate from Howard until 1941. There were intervals of working—as an elevator man, at maintenance jobs, singing in a chorus—anything to make money so that he could keep on studying.

When he was finished at Howard, he came to New York. At an audition for **Ouanga**, an Haitian folk opera, at the New School for Social Research, where he sang the role of Jean Jacques Dessalines, the Haitian national hero, Winters was heard by Herbert Kingsley, who arranged a job in **La Belle Helene**, an opera then going into production. After a run in Westport, Conn., the opera folded and Winters returned to New York "to wait."

"Waiting was no cinch," he recalled. "There was the problem of eating to solve. I was living at the 'Y' and I had to pay for my room."

He solved his dilemma by taking a job as a singing waiter at the Belmont Plaza. Meanwhile, he kept in close touch with Harold Byrnes, the conductor of **Ouanga**, a man of great talent, who coached young Winters, encouraged and believed in him. It was Byrnes who arranged an audition which resulted in Winters' singing in a Leopold Stokowski concert over NBC. He was chosen from among 100 baritones. After that, Winters did not return to the waiter's job. He went with **Porgy and Bess** when it was cast late in 1941, working as alternate and understudy for Todd Duncan, and remained there until he enlisted in the Army.



LAWRENCE WINTERS

"Senator" Jules Munshin sings to Chandler Cowles:

I'm coming, I'm coming,
My head is bending low.
I hear ten million votes all calling
GI Joe.

Betty Garrett sings "Surplus Blues":

You in the Pentagon, all the men you sent are gone.
No one has room, no one goes boom for
Nobody shakes, nobody makes with
Lonely, deserted, unreconverted, little surplus me,

Bill Callahan sings "Call Me Mister":

World's a wonderful place, ain't it?
It's a fine human race, ain't it?
There's a bounce and a drive in just being alive—
Call me mister!

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Broadway Report:

A Fine Dime To Find Out

By JOHN S. WILSON

The Treasury Dept. may not realize it, but it is lousing up one of Lawrence Winters songs in *Call Me Mister*. Winters, a tall, broad-shouldered, handsome baritone, does a song called *The Face on the Dime*, a reference to the soon-to-be-issued dimes bearing FDR's head. Winters and the song's composers, Harold Rome and Arnold Auerbach, thought it would be a sure-fire hit not merely because it is another eulogy of the late President, which are becoming a dime (old or new) a dozen anyhow, but mainly because the Treasury Dept. had assured Rome that the new dimes would be in circulation when *Call Me Mister* opened. Timely, see? But the Treasury Dept. reneged. The dimes are still sitting in some musty old mint and audiences with nothing but old dimes in their pockets are frequently a bit mystified about the subject of Winters' song. Winters himself has one of the few new FDR dimes that have leaked out. He carries it in his hand every time he sings the song.

Like most of the men in *Call Me Mister*, all of whom are ex-GIs, Winters was just barely getting a career started when the Army came along. He had been an intermittently working professional for only a year at the time. At Howard University, where he majored in music, he studied singing under Todd Duncan.

"If I ever attain any great fame as a singer and somebody asks me where I got my real start, I'll tell them it was from Todd Duncan," Winters says. "He is a very great teacher. The students at Howard need him because there are so few really fine Negro voice teachers."

When he was taking his final exams in 1941, he was recommended for a part in *Ouanga*, a Haitian folk opera at the New School for Social Research. This performance brought him a few pleasant critical comments from PM's Henry Simon among others, and a part in *La Belle Helene* in Westport, Conn. *Helene* ran for a week. The cast was told to stand by for a reopening. Winters stood by until he began to run into debt. Then he looked for a job.

"The streets of Harlem are very hot in the Summer," he recalled, "but they're so cold when you're broke."

He finally landed a job at the Glass Hat in the Belmont Plaza as a singing waiter at $7.99 a week plus tips. He sang and waited for four months. Then a solo part on a Stokowski broadcast and six weeks on Erno Rapee's Sunday program earned him a place in the chorus of the revival of *Porgy and Bess*. Within two months he became Todd Duncan's understudy and alternate as Porgy.

And then the war. Winters spent more than three years at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., as an enlisted man and officer in a Special Service unit. When he was discharged last October, Barney Josephson of Cafe Society offered him an engagement.

Since that Cafe Society date started, Winters has been walking around with a slightly haunted air. He's not quite sure who he is. Up until then he had been Lawrence Whissonant. Josephson decided that name was too long and hard to pronounce. It had to be changed. The then Whissonant and his wife juggled names and finally came up with Lawrence Winters because all his luggage was marked L. W. For Cafe Society, Lawrence was shortened to Larry. But with the concert career he is looking forward to in mind, Winters went back to the more dignified Lawrence for *Call Me Mister*. At one time, while he was playing at Cafe Society as Larry Winters, he took part in a concert in Town Hall as Lawrence Whissonant and on the same day press releases for *Call Me Mister* were going out referring to him as Lawrence Winters.

Naturally it was confusing. The other day he went to open a bank account. He filled out the innumerable forms that banks want before they will condescend to take your money, signing them all Lawrence Winters. Then he was asked for identification. He dragged out a mess of cards, Army and civilian. They all identified him as Lawrence Whissonant. The bank eyed him suspiciously and suggested that he start all over on the forms. Right now he's not too sure that he wants a bank account.

Lawrence Winters, featured singer in *Call Me Mister*.
Photo by John Albert, PM

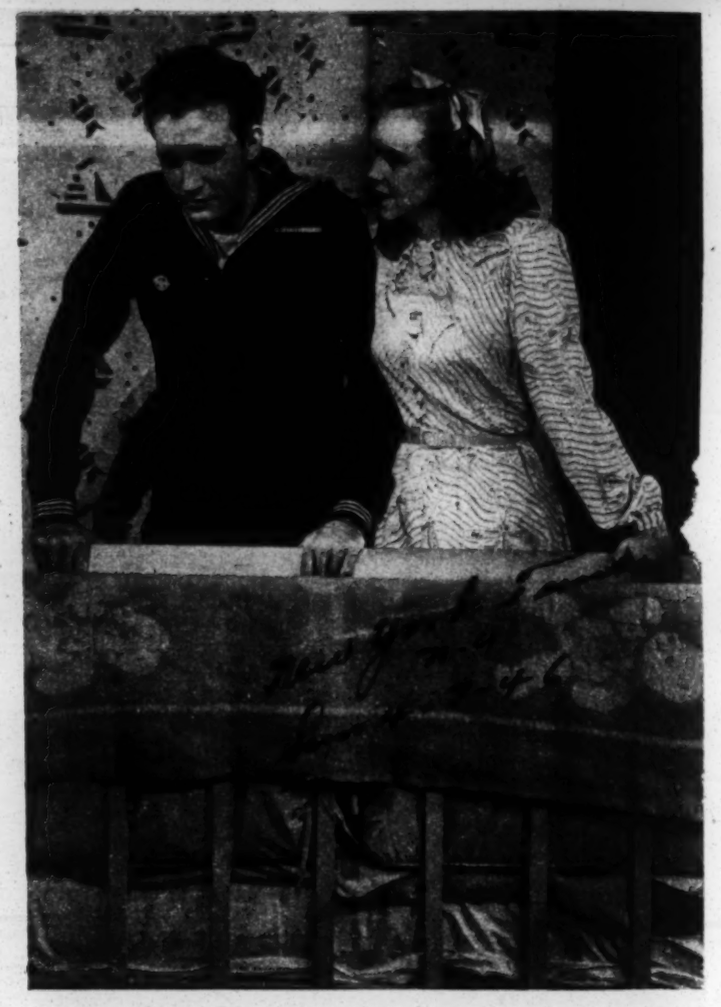
'Call Me Mister'

"Call Me Mister," to quote the opening song, is "written, danced and acted by guys that all are ex-GIs." They stepped from the separation center, together with ex-Wacs and USO entertainers, directly onto the rehearsal stage. And their show, due on Broadway next week, makes the most of the comic and sentimental aspects of personal reconversion. This is how some of Harold Rome's song hits carry out the theme.

The cast sings "Going Home Train":

Engineer, please let it roar,
Wanna see that old familiar kitchen door.
Got my dough and I'm looking
For a girl that knows home-cooking.

Gonna throw these clothes away—
Won't need them again if we guys have our say.
Going home train, never more to roam train,
This train is a going home train, this train.



Danny Scholl and Paula Bane sing "His Old Man":

Gee whiz, his nose is like a bunny!
What dimples on his knee.
O gosh, he looks just like a funny
Pocket edition of me!

Stage Hits Bigotry in 'Call Me Mister'

Gettysburg Camera, Pa.
Sat 5-4-46

By IZZY

NEW YORK—"Call Me Mister," the welcome home musical revue which opened with triumphant success at the National Theatre last week, has been dscribed as being a wonderful valedictory to Selective Service. This is especially good news as one of its stars is Lawrence Winters, brilliant colored baritone who has sung at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall under the name of Lawrence Winsonant. He won wonderful praise for his work in the new show.

The Times, Tribune and News went all along with adjectives in his case.

Aside from the personal success of Mr. Winters, "Call Me Mister" is endowed with a number of splendid qualities. Throughout its twenty-two scenes the colored members of the company are completely integrated into the cast. They are seen as soldiers, civilians and workers along with the others — and there is no problem about it.

One exception is where a strong point is made against discrimination in employment in a sketch called "The Red Ball Express." In this scene, five men, of whom two are colored, are waiting outside a trucking employment office and while waiting to be hired, they break into a song, singing "The Red Ball Express," which tells of their work overseas as drivers of the trucks which played such an important part in the war.

FEARFUL SCENE Sat 5-4-46

As they finish their song, the employer comes out and, after looking over the applicants, points a finger at each of the three white men, indicating that they are hired. They walk into the office and the two Negroes are left standing there as the employer walks back into the office and close the door. Without a single word being spoken, the injustice of the situation is presented with terrific force.

"Call Me Mister" has been produced by Melvyn Douglas and Herman Levin.

Miss Jones Is Back in Town

G. M. New York, N.Y.
6-9-46
PM Reviews

CARMEN JONES, a return engagement of the Oscar Hammerstein II version of Bizet's *Carmen*, presented by Billy Rose at the City Center. The cast includes Muriel Smith, Urylee Leonardos, Napoleon Reed, Le Vern Hutcherson, Elton J. Warren, Coreania Hayman, Glenn Bryant, Buck and Bubbles, Oliver Coleman, Jack Carr and others.

Carmen Jones at the City Center is something of the blessing it was on Broadway, and a far greater bargain. Whatever minor complaints one may choose to register, it remains a fine spirited show. It makes something of its own, something just right for Broadway, out of one of the most pulsating stories and most perfect scores in all opera. It doesn't for a moment, as some people have shockingly contended, replace *Carmen*, even as *Carmen* is lustrelessly produced at the Met. Fortunately for both versions, the two things are not even in the same world. But *Carmen Jones* is, at any rate, not a mere watering down of *Carmen;* instead, it is a kind of whiskeying up.

As the novelty of *Carmen Jones* begins to wear off, one falls back more and more on Bizet's glittering, swaggering, incomparably animated music. Robert Russell Bennett's orchestrations still seem admirable, and Sunday night most of the score was, by Broadway standards, well sung. On the show side, *Carmen Jones* still seems a little uncertain of itself at the beginning; the country-club chatter is not the happiest of Mr. Hammerstein's inspirations; and the choreography, which was always uneven, is still so, without reaching as high as it used to do at its best. Possibly my memories led me to expect too much, but I don't think the night-club dancing has quite all the hot, Harlemesque excitement it once had; and I am quite sure that the take-off on Spanish dancing has lost all its style. Tues 6-9-46

But things are still lively, Mr. Hammerstein's book is still engaging, and most of the performers are up to their jobs. As Carmen, Muriel Smith not only sings well, but performs well in an obvious way; gets plenty of tempting sex and taunting arrogance into the role. She made a real thing of the *Sequidilla*. Napoleon Reed is a nice Joe. Glenn Bryant remains a towering Husky Miller who bawls out "Stand up and fight until you hear the bell." Buck and Bubbles brighten the proceedings, particularly as part of the *Quintet*, which, transposed into *Whizzin' Away Along de Track*, remains one of the most amusing and least *Carmen*-like things in the show. And as Cindy Lou, Elton J. Warren makes Micaela's great third-act aria the big number of the evening.

TO RETURN AS CARMEN

Muriel Smith, who will be seen in "Carmen Jones," the Negro musical opening a repeat engagement April 7 at the City Center.

"Carmen Jones" to pass up segregated houses on tour

Tribune Los Angeles, Calif.
Sat 6-22-46

NEW YORK — (CNS) — Billy Rose, who for three years refused to let his "Carmen Jones" cast perform in Baltimore and Washington, is now allowing the show to tour but, not to segregated houses. 6-22-46

"I don't expect to settle a 100 year old problem in one town," the pint sized producer exclaimed, "but I do expect to make some headway and do some good." The tour is a 40 week one and "will hit towns from Washington to Birmingham."

In Washington, Billy claims "Carmen Jones" will not play the National theater. Instead, he is leasing the Uline arena and converting it into a theater. "There will be no lines drawn in Washington," he says. 6-22-46

All along the lines, mixed houses with no Jim Crow will be the rule wherever possible. But where such a policy is impossible in the South, there will be all Negro and all white audiences. To solve the eating and sleeping problem, the company is traveling in private Pullmans with a diner and will live in them on the road. 6-22-46

Rose claimed "Carmen Jones" is the first Negro legitimate show to attempt a tour. "I think we deserve credit for a good try and I know it's going over," he said.

Memphis Bars "Carmen Jones"

The Afro-American
Sat. 6-29-46

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—Ellis Auditorium, municipally owned showhouse, last week turned thumbs down on a proposed date for Billy Rose's Broadway hit, "Carmen Jones," now being readied for a tour of the South.

Col. C. A. McElravy, manager of the auditorium, gave as his reason to Ned Alvord, Rose's representative seeking dates for the tour, that he didn't have suitable dates open. But that he wouldn't let the building to play "Carmen Jones" if there were dates available. Baltimore, Md.

Highbrow and Lowbrow Go for 'Carmen Jones'

The Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky.
Sun. 11-10-46

"CARMEN JONES" will be at the Memorial Auditorium for two performances next Friday and Saturday nights.

The show comes with the prestige of the longest New York stay experienced by an attraction of comparable character and two record-breaking return engagements. The big organization is now in its fourth season, with cast and production, it is claimed, intact.

During the six decades that the Metropolitan Opera Company has been in existence, the classic "Carmen" has been presented fewer than a quarter as many times as "Carmen Jones." This is true despite the fact that Metropolitan casts have boasted such celebrated singers as Emma Calve, Geraldine Farrar, Maria Jeritza, Mary Garden and Gladys Swarthout.

That vague littoral commonly known as Broadway is the despair of logic. There are no rules. This chaotic condition reaches its apogee in the theater. Productions that have met with high critical praise have been damned by popular apathy at the box office. Conversely, many extremely solvent ventures have failed to win the kudos of the intelligentsia.

Fortunately for producer Billy Rose, "Carmen Jones" captivated both camps. Pundits with exalted foreheads have been cheek-by-jowl with ordinary entertainment-seekers in praising it.

"Carmen Jones" is a refutation that too many cooks spoil the broth. No fewer than a baker's dozen have fingers prominently in the pie. With the immortal score of Bizet's opera intact, Oscar Hammerstein II. has fabricated a 1946 book, Hassard Short has streamlined the performance, and it is mounted colorfully in the costumes of Raoul Pene DuBois against decor by Howard Bay.

When it first was produced, "Carmen Jones" was called as modern as next Tuesday's newspaper. Serious musicians praised its use of the original operatic music in a production that had "swing" labeled all over it.

Muriel Smith
She sings the title role

Ford Buck and John Bubbles
They're in an up-to-date "Carmen"

All Negro Cast Uses Old Music And New Story

The Courier-Journal

By BOYD MARTIN.

Although it will be taken over by the Music Department because of its operatic score "Carmen Jones," is the main theatrical event of the week. It will open at Memorial Auditorium for performances Friday and Saturday night, and is being sent to us by Billy Rose as a general entertainment commodity.

For sheer show bountifulness and excitement "Carmen Jones," despite its dignified foundation, is considered one of the mo successful bits of tampering with tradition that has come before the public in many a day.

Being a daring departure—the borrowing of a renowned opera score to serve in a musical play having a Negro legend as the book and appropriate Negro songs, and all done by a Negro cast—"Carmen Jones" falls readily in the realm of topical entertainment. Louisville, Ky.

Bizet Score Used.

Oscar Hammerstein II, who fashioned the libretto for the now celebrated "Oklahoma," has done a like job for the Meilhac and Halevy story and it is said that he has retained the general scheme of the original but transplanted the old lyrics and book into modern Negro terms and spirit—all against the background of the treasured Georges Bizet score. Thurs 11-14-4

The company presenting "Carmen Jones" here is said, all along the line, to be an excellent one.

Instead of a cigarette factory in Spain, this "Carmen" is set in a parachute factory near a Southern town. The acting then shifts to Chicago, where the dusty sweetheart of Carmen, the Husky Miller, has ordered her to be brought by his managers, for his entertainment as he trains for a fight.

66c 1946 Musicals ("St. Louis Woman")

'ST. LOUIS WOMAN' BRINGS GAY '90s TO BROADWAY

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 6-22-46

In a burst of music, song, and lavish costuming the new Edward Gross production, "St. Louis Woman," with a star-studded cast, hits the Mansfield Theatre on Broadway. In the scene above, June Hawkins, extreme left, and Rex Ingram, extreme right, watch with distress as Harold Nicholas and Ruby Hill leave the cake-walk together. At left three can-can "take five" after a workout on dance routine. They are, left to right, Enid Williams, Betty Nichols and Gwendolyn Hale. The story, adapted from the Arna Bontemps' novel, "God Send Sunday," concerns the St. Louis beauty who falls in love with a race track jockey, to the dismay of her big-shot lover, who connives to keep the two apart. The ending is "happy ever after."

"St. Louis Woman" Folds After Stormy B'way Run

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 7-13-46

NEW YORK — One of the strangest coincidents in the short but turbulent career of "St. Louis Woman," the Arna Bontemps-Countee Cullen musical, was the fact that when it closed last Saturday, after 113 performances, the contract of Muriel Rahn also ran out.

Miss Rahn had been collecting $750 per week, although not appearing in the play, because she had been dropped from the lead role after signing a four-month contract and playing but two performances.

Subject of a raging controversy in the weekly press and public forums prior to its casting and opening, the opus had a stormy career throughout its tryout period on the road and during its Broadway run.

Faced Uncertain Future

Both in New Haven and Boston, there was considerable rewriting of the book. And even during the tryouts there was considerable uncertainty among the cast, there being several tryouts for a number of roles, including that of Della Green, the lead role played by Ruby Hill.

Shortly after arriving in New York, the producers decided to replace Miss Hill with Miss Rahn. After two performances, certain members of the cast lead a revolt which resulted in the return of Miss Hill to the cast.

Miss Rahn, however, was not to be brushed off so blythly and headed for Actors' Equity waving her contract and seeking balm for her injured professional dignity in the form of an apology, which was tantamount to public acknowledgement of wrong. She received satisfaction on both counts.

Equity Supported Case

The producers were ordered to honor the contract obligations, which included a raise in salary until the termination date. Harold Nicholas and Rex Ingram, alleged leaders of the revolt, came forth with statements of regret.

The former star of "Carmen Jones" was being paid in keeping with her contract, the sum of $650 weekly from opening date, March 30, to June 1, and $750 from June 1 to July 6, the show's closing date.

Ruby Hill has the title role in *St. Louis Woman*, the popular musical at the Martin Beck. Capitol Records has just brought out an album of the music from the show (*See review below*).

ST. LOUIS WOMAN (Capitol, five ten inch discs, $4.46): Harold Arlen has composed an ambitious and interesting, if not altogether successful, score for the all-Negro musical at the Martin Beck. What is wrong mostly is that his score tries too hard for folk opera flavor: it is pretentious where it should be simple; it borrows from similar shows of the past; it occasionally goes operatic, and, like a second-rate opera, comes out just dull.

However Arlen's score—and *St. Louis Woman*—have two great assets: *Come Rain or Come Shine* and Pearl Bailey. *Come Rain or Come Shine* is a poignant, torchy love song, performed feelingly by Ruby Hill and Harold Nicholas. And Miss Bailey is a singer with a dryly humorous manner, a way of taking a naughty song and giving it a slyly innocent rendition that you will want to become acquainted with—if you haven't already. Miss Bailey works without smiling very much but there is a gleam in her eye—you can almost see it as you listen to her sing the two comedy songs from the show, *Legalize My Name* and *It's a Woman's Prerogative*. And Johnny Mercer has written brightly lyrics for Miss Bailey, and also for the rest of the show. Robert Pope, June Hawkins and a large orchestra directed by Leon Leonardi, are also heard to good effect in the album, which has been recorded very satisfactorily by Capitol. June 6-30-46

(*Note*: Miss Bailey's rendition of *Legalize My Name* and *It's a Woman's Prerogative* are also to be found on a single disc issue recently by Columbia. It sells for 53c.)

Pearl Bailey, the singing comedienne of *St. Louis Woman*, who is also appearing in the current show at the Zanzibar.

Photo by Leo Lieb, PM

CRITICAL and AMUSEMENTS

Broadway Report:

The Pearl of Great Spice

P.M. New York, N.Y.
Jues 7-2-46

By JOHN S. WILSON

Pearl Bailey, whose ingenuous style of singing about life between the sexes brings down the house in *St. Louis Woman* twice a night, is a tall, easy-going, friendly girl who likes to relax. And the theater, she finds, is not half as good for relaxing purposes as a night club or vaudeville show.

"I get tired doing the same thing all the time in *St. Louis Woman*," she says. "You can't change your act and you have to work steady for three hours. I'd rather do five shows a day in vaudeville.

St. Louis Woman is Pearl's first show. For the past 12 years she's been singing around the country without attracting much attention until she went into The Blue Angel a couple of years ago. Then things started happening. Jues 7-2-46

"I could relax there," is her explanation for the sudden rash of excited notices she received.

She had been booked for two weeks and stayed eight months. Columbia Records signed her up and started putting her pointed, impatient ditties on wax. She went on a theater tour with Cab Calloway, heralded in large letters as an "extra added attraction." When *St. Louis Woman* opened, some of the critics were bored with the show but none of them failed to give at least a moderate rave to Pearl Bailey.

Her style has frequently been compared to early Ethel Waters but she doesn't think that she has fashioned her singing after anyone.

"The way I sing is the way I live," she explains. "Ethel Waters has always been my favorite singer. I think Billie Holiday is the greatest stylist and Ella Fitzgerald is the greatest natural singer. Ethel wraps them all up in one. She styles them, sings them and sells them. But I'm not really a singer. What I do is like telling a story to music, more like talking. I do songs that people know and then add my twist. It's got to be something that brings a laugh. The audience enjoys it because they know the song and they know what I'm doing. If I just sang a song it would mean nothing."

Pearl made her first appearance, appropriately enough, on the stage of the Pearl Theater in Philadelphia, where she grew up, in 1933. She was 15 and just finishing high school. Her brother, Bill Bailey, the tap dancer, was rehearsing some girls at the theater and her mother sent her there to get Bill to come home for dinner. This innocent mission ended up in a fight between Bill and Pearl. Jues 7-2-46

"I was mad," she recalls. "It was Amateur Night at the Pearl that night and I figured it would embarrass Bill if I entered the contest. So I did and I got first prize and a week's engagement. I was to get $15 for the week. Then I was held over a second week so I decided I would collect my pay for both weeks at once because Christmas was coming up. In the middle of my second week the theater closed and I didn't collect a thing."

But this led to engagements in the Pennsylvania coal country and soon she was working steadily in night clubs and vaudeville. About five years ago she did some singing with bands: the Sunset Royal, Cootie Williams and Count Basie. She lasted two weeks with Basie, who didn't seem to think much of her. But she clicked with Cootie Williams.

"He came close to understanding my style," she says. "He let me relax."

Aside from her yen to relax, Pearl has literary ambitions. Ever since she was a little girl she has read a book a day and has been writing blank verse about the waywardness of love and her thoughts on life and people in general. Since she picked up a typewriter a few years ago, she has pecked out her verse with one uncertain finger. The result is very neat, but it hasn't got any punctuation.

When *S. Louis Woman* ends its run, she is going to take her first fling at Hollywood. And she won't just be doing specialty numbers that are jimmied into a picture with a shoehorn. She is going to play parts. And she's going to play them straight—no dialect. Jues 7-2-46

Despite the fact that she has built her reputation as a singer, her main problem has always been to avoid dancing. People associate her with her brother Bill and assume she is a dancer. She's been dancing ever since she could walk, but she'd rather sing. It's more relaxing.

In "St. Louis Woman"
The afro-American

RUTH CRUMPTON, Baltimore, Md. Sat.
who played the role Myrt in "Carmen Jones," has replaced June Hawkins in the role of Lila in "St. Louis Woman," currently at the Martin Beck Theatre in New York. She's a native of Newark, N.J., and a graduate of Wilberforce University.
7-6-46

Cast of 'St. Louis Woman' Is An Enthusiastic Bunch

Amsterdam News New York

2-16-46

Very seldom does a cast get really enthusiastic about a showing opening. They are nervous and pleased at the possibility of success, but to see the great majority of the actors really excited about the show they are to play in, gives promise of a good show and good performance.

The cast of "St. Louis Woman" is excited about the play, the music, the actors, the chorus and the whole thing. The enthusiasm of the cast spills over and seeps into the feelings of the casual bystander. One cannot visit the rehearsals and talk to any of the many fine singers, dancers and actors assembled without feeling that this will be one of the biggest and best musical plays ever brought to Broadway.

Talent runs rampant on the half-darkened stage of the Martin Beck Theatre where last minute changes and afterthoughts are being fitted into the show. The air of confusion that bars the laymen from participating in their fun, clears up for the players the minute the footlights go on and the cues are given. Every song will fit into place and every line will be spoken at the proper time, even though there seems to be no order.

Perhaps the best known of all the stars that have gathered are the Nicholas Brothers. The natural rhythm they have incorporated into their dancing flows freely even when they merely walk across the stage. Harold as Little Augy is one of the leads. This is his first dramatic role and he handles it very nicely. Both Harold and Fayard take acting right in stride and seem to have no qualms about opening night.

2-16-46

More nervous, and rightly so, is newcomer Ruby Hill. Miss Hill's first attempt at the legitimate stage is still a source of wonder to her. She's a little bewildered by the hustle and bustle and often asks herself if she really belongs there or is it just a beautiful dream. The refreshing personality and charming appearance of this lovely young lady has captivated everyone concerned with the play. Lena Horne can well be envious when the critics tell about Ruby Hill.

Born in Richmond, Virginia, Miss Hill pestered her parents into letting her get some training in dramatics. Nothing happened, however, until just recently. A USO tour and a three-week engagement with Noble Sissle's band seemed as near to Broadway or Hollywood as Miss Hill would ever come, or at least she thought so. Then out of the sky she was recommended for the part of Della Green. The producers, looking for a new face after Miss Horne refused the part, made no mistake.

Veteran actor, Rex Ingram, makes the villianous Bigelow stand out as one of the evilest of all stage villains. Beyond that, he needs no introduction or explanation. More newcomers to the stage are the delightful Coleman children. Yvonne, 8 and Herbert, 7, will capitate every audience and steal every scene they are in. Herbert is a self-possessed youngster who has the most amazing baritone voice ever heard from a child. His sister specializes in dance routines and the pair provide some wonderful moments.

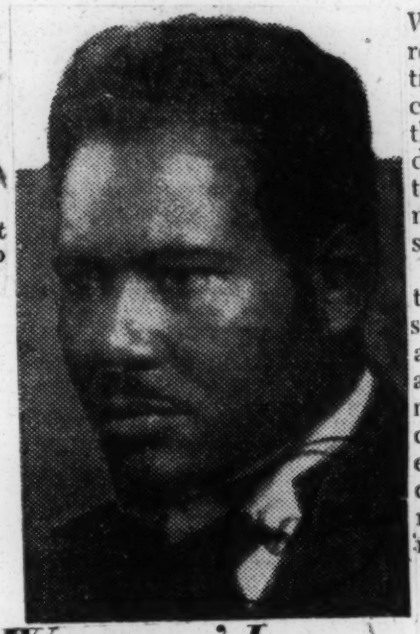
2-16-46

Something has to be said about the music in the "Woman." It cannot be ignored. Johnny Mercer and Harold Arlen got together and produced the tunes that will be hummed from coast to coast in a few months. "Cake-Walking Lady," "Sweetin' Water," "Free and Easy" are just a few of the titles. A chorus under the direction of Leon Leonardi does them up right, too. The dancers, with the [illegible] guidance of Anthony Tudor, dance instructor for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, step their way through several intricate numbers with the ease that usually comes only through long years of practice together.

The list of actors and actresses that make up the rest of the cast is long. Juanita Hall from the original Showboat Cast, Pearl Bailey, Robert Pope, June Hawkins from Porgy and Bess, and a lot more.

66c Amsterdam News New York 2-16-46

ST. LOUIS WOMAN: Newcomer Ruby Hill and veteran actor Rex Ingram, below, are only part of the large cast of the new musical play, "St. Louis Woman" opening in New York on March 14. Miss Hill plays the part of "Della Green", once turned down by Lena Horne



'Woman' Is a Sometime Thing

PM Reviews

ST. LOUIS WOMAN, a new musical with music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Johnny Mercer and book by Arna Bontemps and Countee Cullen, presented by Edward Gross at the Martin Beck. The cast includes Harold and Fayard Nicholas, Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, Ruby Hill, June Hawkins, Juanita Hall, Elwood Smith and Robert Pope; staged by Rouben Mamoulian; settings and costumes by Lemuel Ayers; dances by Charles Walters; musical direction by Leon Leonardi.

St. Louis Woman begins nicely, with a beckoning and rather bright first act. There are pleasant moments in the two acts that follow and likeable people in the company. It is also an attractive show to look at. But it runs quite badly downhill, and doesn't as a whole come off. The reason may perhaps be found in the subtitle, which accurately describes *St. Louis Woman* as a "musical play." It is not a musical comedy; it has very little dancing, no chorus lines, no regulation production numbers. The burden of the evening rests on the story, as told in words and music; and the story cannot stand up under it. For the story is obvious and commonplace, with a certain folk-operatic flavor, but without the proper operatic swell and excitement. It is an all-Negro period piece, in spots a "blues" piece, of the '80s, and it is made tedious from being spun out to excessive length, and made trivial from being glazed with musical-comedy icing. A real musical play would have made fewer compromises. And though the book of *St. Louis Woman* is the work of two very reputable Negro writers, one questions whether the kind of glib characterizations it falls back on, the kind of stock humor and melodrama, is in the Negro's best interest. Whether so or not, the triteness and long-windedness of the story prove dramatically disastrous.

First-rate music might yet have turned the tide, but Harold Arlen's songs and orchestral tags and tidbits are second-rate even for him. They are most of them romantic or atmospheric enough, but they lack distinction, they lack melodic urgency, they lack the excitement and cohesive power that folk drama demands. It is an agreeable score, but nothing more than that. Nor is most of it well sung: the two leading characters, Ruby Hill and Harold Nicholas, have other virtues, but their voices are weak.

Pearl Bailey is the comedienne of *St. Louis Woman.*

Mon 4-1-46

The story portrays Miss Hill as Della Green, a beautiful gal of easy morals who throws over a saloon-keeper for a successful jockey called Little Augie. In a highly complicated scene, the saloon-keeper is shot by one of his old girls, but thinks he has been shot by Augie, and dies laying a curse upon him. When Augie's luck with his mounts deserts him, Della leaves him, hoping to break the jinx. The jinx, whatever the reason, is soon broken, and the lovers lose no time getting together.

It is really when *St. Louis Woman* takes out from its more serious pursuits that it comes to life. It lets itself bust out dancing only once, but then it breaks into a fine, happy cakewalk contest that has that blend of humor and style which makes the cakewalk one of the really great folk dances. The show rations its fun very skimpily, but when it lets Pearl Bailey sing a couple of sexy songs in her lusty, half-innocent, half-insinuating way, gaiety sweeps onto the stage. The finale of the show, too—though it is a descent into pure musical comedy—has real humor and freshness. But the show has bounce only at the intervals—and then only by snub-bing its more serious intentions.

Miss Hill is a stunning young woman, though hardly more of an A word, finally, must be said for

Rex Ingram, June Hawkins, Pearl Bailey, Robert Pope (said to be Juanita Hall of The Duri Ives) Juanita Hall will be signed by Anthony Tudor. choreographer and

Among those occupying major roles are the Nicholas Brothers (Harold and Fayard), Ruby Hill,

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HIRSCHFELD PHILADELPHIA

66c

The New York Times
New York, N.Y.
Sun. 3-24-46

Herewith, Mr. Hirschfeld's impressions of the cakewalk to be seen in "St. Louis Woman," the new musical play arriving at the Martin Beck on Saturday.

'ST. LOUIS WOMAN' WILL OPEN TONIGHT

Daily News

All-Negro Musical Arriving at Martin Beck—Ruby Hill Is Seen in Leading Role

Edward Gross' all-Negro musical play, "St. Louis Woman," will have its première this evening at the Martin Beck Theatre. Written by Arna Bontemps and the late Countee Cullen, the book is based on the former's novel, "Good Sends Sunday." The musical score has been contributed by Harold Arlen and the lyrics are by Johnny Mercer. Rouben Mamoulian has directed the production for which Lemuel Ayers has designed the scenery and costumes. Charles Walters has created the dances and Leon Leonardi has been commissioned as musical director.

As the title indicates, the action of story takes place in St. Louis just before the turn of the century. Specifically, it deals with the amours of one Della Green, a shady lady with falls in love with a gambler. Originally, the production was tried out as a straight play by the Gilpin Players of Cleveland in 1933 and five years later by the Federal Theatre at the Mayan Theatre, Los Angeles.

The title role in "St. Louis Woman" will be played, after all, by Ruby Hill, who originally played the part on the road for four weeks. Until last night Muriel Rahn had been announced for it, but she withdrew at the eleventh hour. A spokesman for the producer had no explanation for the sudden change, but explained that Miss Hill took over immediately, since she had been understudying Miss Rahn.

Featured in the company are the Nicholas Brothers, Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, June Hawkins and Juanita Hall. Arthur Freed and Sam Katz, both of MGM, are financially interested in the venture, which is said to represent an investment of about $200,000.

Another opening off Broadway is "Theatre Parade," a variety show sponsored by Stage for Action to be presented tomorrow evening at Carnegie Hall. Employing such well-known performers as Sono Osato, Joan McCracken, Mitzi Green, Jane Dulo, Martha Scott, Howard Da Silva and Imogene Coca, the entertainment marks the first large scale offering by the organization. A special feature of the program will be a performance of "Dream Job," a twenty-minute play by Arnold Perl, attacking racial discrimination.

Behind "St. Louis Woman" Scenes

Muriel Rahn Shocked Over Intrigue

The Washington Tribune

Hundreds of people did not know that Muriel Rahn would not open with this show as scheduled because Muriel Rahn herself did not know it until 24 hours before the premiere. She opened her messages and read them. They were from friends and well-wishers from coast to coast; but somehow they had an eerie effect. It was like reading condolence messages of your own funeral; like congratulations on a wedding that did not come off. She was stunned, shocked and hurt by the events that brought this about only 24 hours before. *Thur. 4-9-46*

Muriel Rahn is not mean, she could never be mean, she is not insecure; she is smart, brainy, intelligent and talented. Since she is not mean, she would not notify the public of her replacement.

She felt that she would endanger or jeopardize the run of the play and the jobs of 50 or more performers. Miss Rahn could not be that mean even though this very foul deed had been inflicted upon her by a clique in "St. Louis Woman" headed by Rex Ingram and Harold Nicholas. Miss Rahn waited until after the play opened, when both critics and audiences had passed their approval, to tell her story. She wanted to give the show a chance. Now her story can be told.

Didn't Seek Role

Muriel Rahn did not seek the role of "Della Green" in "St. Louis Woman." She was not interested in theatrical assignment this season. She was tired from a strenuous concert tour of over 10,000 miles, just completed this month. Besides she was scheduled for a New York Town Hall recital on April 2. But, producers Ed Gross and Sam Katz asked Muriel to take over the leading role in the show because they felt that Ruby Hill, who had been playing the role during its pre-Broadway try-out, was a little weak and inexperienced. Director Reuben Mamoulian approved of Miss Rahn and selected her for the replacement. The producers and the director felt they had a good show but felt that Miss Rahn might spell the difference between a good reception and an excellent reception. They were right! That it, in-so-far as the critics' reception is concerned, for four New York daily papers gave "St. Louis Woman" good notices, while five New York papers were definitely bad. This reception is "half bad—half good." *Thur. 4-9-46*

They convinced Muriel Rahn that she would help the show and they paid her the price she asked for, $650.00 per week to June 1, and $750.00 per week to July 6. After that she was not interested in continuing because she wished to vacation a while and then prepare for next season's concerts. But then she felt that whatever asset she might have been to the show would have been realized and it could carry on safely without her.

Miss Rahn plunged deeply into the arduous task of learning the heaviest role in the show within the short space of 6 days. She came through admirably if the statements of the producers and the director, as well as the congratulations of all members of the cast, mean anything. She had rehearsed 12 to 16 hours a day learning new songs, new lines and new stage directions without exhibiting any weariness, temperament, or lack of cooperation of any sort.

But somewhere in the corners of the dark, dimly lighted backstage dressing rooms there was some "politics" going on. A whispering campaign was in process. "Factions" and "cliques" were busy, and phony people were making pretty remarks and thinking something else. Muriel Rahn was too busy learning the role of "Della Green" to observe these goings on. *Thur. 4-9-46*

Reasons for Opposition

She did not know that those people who had kissed her and congratulated her, yes even cheered her after her first preview, had now formed a "mob" to stifle her, to cut her down, to kill-off her appearance in "St. Louis Woman," for no other reason except that they desired someone else in the role. And what reasons could they give or not wanting Muriel Rahn? These are the reasons as stated by Rex Ingram and Harold Nicholas. First, Mr. Nicholas . . . "I have nothing personal against Miss Rahn, she is a fine person and a fine actress, but she over-shadows me and makes me ill at ease on the stage." Next, Mr. Ingram . . . "I think Miss Rahn is a lady and a fine actress but she makes me uneasy on the stage, I would rather dig potatoes than work with her and I don't care if they expel me from Equity (actor's union) I still won't go on the stage with her opening night."

These were the sole reasons given, there were no others. Everyone complimented Miss Rahn as being a lady and a fine actress, yet this "lady" and "fine actress" made them "uneasy" on the stage, and for this they would cut her down, kill-off her chances of appearing in the title role of a Broadway musical, humiliate and insult her, for these weak reasons which say nothing and mean less.

They waited until Miss Rahn completed her third preview in "St. Louis Woman" and was in the home stretch for the premiere before they whispered among themselves that "a meeting" was being called in the lobby of the Martin Beck with the producer. Said meeting was being called by Rex Ingram and Harold Nicholas. About sixteen others whose knowledge of the "meeting" and what was to be discussed was not quite well known, followed "the stars" out to the lobby. One member of this group of 16, Milton Williams, stated later that since this was Pearl Bailey's birthday he thought it was to be a little private birthday party for her. Nevertheless, he strung along and claims he was shocked when the actual intent of the meeting became evident.

He heard Rex Ingram vilify Muriel Rahn. He heard him lay down the law to the producer, threatening not to go on Saturday night, and the producer quacked in his boots. Some of the members of this "committee" stated later that they felt a little ashamed at having been identified with this group. But the deed had been done! *Thur. 4-9-46*

When the producer told Miss Rahn about this the next day and brought Ruby Hill in for rehearsal, she could not believe her ears or her eyes. She could not believe that a producer would break a contract as iron-clad as the one she held because a clique of disgruntled performers made a feeble protest against her appearance in the show. Therefore she requested that the producer call the cast together and permit her to face her "accusers." The producer granted her request. *Thur. 4-9-46*

"What have I done to you," Miss Rahn stated before the cast of 45, and asked, "Haven't I treated everyone with respect? Haven't I treated you as ladies and gentlemen? Haven't I tried to do my work? What have you against me?" Everyone sat silent for a moment then one by one they arose and began to compliment her. Everything they said was "You are a fine person, you are a lady, you are a swell actress. We have nothing against you."

"If I am all of these things, then why Mr. Nicholas and Mr. Ingram, do you refuse to work with me on the stage? Why are you asking the producer to break his contract with me?"

Pearl Bailey Rises

At this point Pearl Bailey, another principal in the cast, could stand the hypocrisy no longer. Said Miss Bailey, "You are all being hypocrites, have the guts to tell her what you said behind her back!" She pointed her finger at Rex Ingram and Harold Nicholas. Then Mr. Nicholas arose and made his feeble protest against Miss Rahn. Mr. Ingram then arose and made a similar feeble protest but with more emotion.

As it is, this small "wildcat revolt" against a fellow coworker will cause an innocent producer $10,900 in salary payments. Perhaps it will be a consolation to the entire cast of "St. Louis Woman" whom Miss Rahn feels is more hurt, in a way, than she is because of a statement made by producer Ed Gross to her a few hours before the premiere of "St. Louis Woman." *Thur. 4-9-46*

Mr. Gross said, "I will never produce another Negro show again. I don't know how to handle Negroes."

New Musical Play in Manhattan

St. Louis Woman (book by Arna Bontemps & the late Countee Cullen; music by Harold Arlen; lyrics by Johnny Mercer; produced by Edward Gross) shows something more than musicomedy's aspirations but something less than its appeal. An all-Negro period yarn of the '90s, it pins its faith almost entirely on its story and its music. But the story is too trite and trumped-up to deserve such prominent treatment. The music, which therefore needs to be specially engaging, is no more than agreeable. *4-8-46*

This barroom-ballad of a tale concerns Della Green (Ruby Hill), a loose and lovely charmer who chucks a saloonkeeper for a whirlwind jockey called Little Augie (Harold Nicholas). The saloonkeeper gets plugged by a discarded flame, but thinking that Augie fired the shot, puts a dying-breath curse on him. Augie's luck changes and, hoping to lift the jinx, Della leaves him. But his luck soon returns, and so does the lady. *Time Magazine*

The bright side of *St. Louis Woman* is its musicomedy side. The show's only real dance number, a spanking cakewalk contest, has style and dash. The show's only real comic, Nightclub Singer Pearl Bailey, has the lumbering slink and lusty humor to turn two sex-salted ditties, *Legalize My Name* and *A Woman's Prerogative* into near show-stoppers. The show's boisterous finale, with a frenzied crowd perched on rooftops and stepladders for a sneak-view of Augie's big race, has freshness, bounce. Lemuel Ayers's sets and costumes [illegible]e musicomedy splash and color. But [illegible]udience, to earn its candy, has to get down a full plateful of spinach.

'St. Louis Woman' In 100th Performance

The Michigan Chronicle, Detroit, Michigan

The cast of "St. Louis Woman" played the hundredth performance of the musical hit at the Martin Beck theater at the matinee June 26, and advance sales indicate that the Edward Gross production featuring The Nicholas Brothers, comedienne Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, Ruby Hill and Juanita Hall will continue at this theatre throughout the summer and well into the fall season. Written by Arna Bontemps and the late poet Countee Cullen, the play has music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by Johnny Mercer in songs which are among the most popular ever composed by these top songsmiths. Costumes and settings by Lemuel Ayers have won praise for originality and beauty, and the spectacular dances were staged by Charles Walters. The entire production was directed by Rouben Mamoulian. *Sat. 7-13-46*

'St Louis Woman' Blessed by Critic

Pittsburg Courier
Pittsburg, Pa.
Sat 4-6-46

By IZZY

NEW YORK—Della Green, that notorious "St. Louis Woman," made her Broadway bow last Saturday night at the Martin Beck Theatre before a brilliant audience of first-nighters. With all her diamond rings, she pulled those men of hers around by her apron strings. And if customer reaction has anything to do with it, the lady has a long term lease on her New York address.

One of the most colorful musical revues to make its appearance in the sepia show world for quite a spell, the opus is reported to also be one of the most expensive, having cost its backers in the neighborhood of $200,000. True to the 1898 era in which the plot unfolds, costumes are lavishly spangled and bright in color, and sets are intricately designed down to the last detail of the gas-light period.

The role of Della Green was played by Ruby Hill, instead of Muriel Rahn, who had previously been advertised, and who had done the part at three preview performances. Miss Hill is a winsome beauty who ably fills the bill as "the prettiest girl in St. Louis," and although her voice is not as strong as it might be, she still manages to creditably carry off the role of the lovely lady who stood so high in men's favor.

CAST COMES THROUGH

The Nicholas Brothers, Harold as "Little Augie," and Fayard as "Barney," are superbly cast, and get many opportunities to display the terpsichorean grace and skill which have made them famous both on the stage and screen. As the pair of swaggering, little braggart jockeys, the brothers demonstrate that their talents are not limited to dancing, but also include singing and genuine dramatic ability.

Pearl Bailey is a "natural" in the role of "Butterfly," the lovesick waitress, who spends all her time trying to hook, finally and firmly, the elusive Barney in the toils of matrimony. During the course of the chase, she gets the opportunity to sing two songs, which have the cleverest lyrics heard in a month of Sundays. But clever though they are, it's Miss Bailey's gestures and frozen-faced rendition of "Legalize My Name" and "A Woman's Prerogative" which make them the comedy hits of the show.

Rex Ingram, as the cabaret owner Biglow Brown, who is recognized as one of the finest colored actors on the stage today, turns in his usual fine performance, and is particularly realistic in his death scene. June Hawkins, as Biglow's discarded love, shows her lovely soprano voice off to good advantage in the mournful ballads, "True Love" and "Sleep Peaceful." Juanita Hall, who has recently been more associated with the direction of her choir than with dramatics, is excellent as Augie's big sister Leah, along with the three youngsters who portray her children. Of the trio, Joseph Eady as Jackie, is adorable as he sings "We Shall Meet to Part, No Never," in a high wavering soprano.

A trifle longer than the average show, "St. Louis Woman" still manages to entertain, amuse and en-

Complete Change Can Fit 'St. Louis Woman' For Broadway, Critic Says

Chicago Defender Sat 3-2-46
Chicago, Ill.

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—The long-heralded musical comedy "St. Louis Woman," with an all-race cast, was given its world premier here Thursday night. Edward Gross, the Hollywood movie mogul opened wide his purse to give the production a lavish and handsome mounting, but when the overlong curtain fell, shortly after midnight, it all added up to exactly nothing.

"St. Louis Woman" is a dull, pretentious and boring evening of theater. The probability of a long run success when it opens its Broadway run at Martin Beck theater in New York March 21, is on the negative side. The show is playing in Boston this week where its sponsors are tinkering with it and tightening up its weak spots. The show fails in the comedy department, and in having a second-rate cast that sells the production short.

The consensus of critical opinion here is that Lena Horne did well to reject the leading role which was offered to her. The entire production does not add anything to the dignity nor standing of the race. It supposedly portrays life as lived on Targett st., St. Louis, at the turn of the century and the audience gets the 100 per cent impression that all race people in St. Louis led an adulterous hard-drinking, blaspheming and gambling existence.

The best thing about "St. Louis Woman" is the grade A musical score written in good commercial jazz blues idiom by Harold Arlen. The lyrics by Johnny Mercer, were also out of the top drawer.

The cast, however, fails to do justice to Arlen's music. Ruby Hill, the comparative unknown who stepped into the part written for Lena Horne and Harold Nicholas who played the lead role of little Augie are obviously miscast. Neither the voices of Miss Hill or Nicholas carried beyond the first few rows. They were unable to cope with complicated jazz rhythms of Arlen's music. Their histrionic ability could also stand some improvement.

The two show stoppers, "Legalize My Name" and "A Woman's Prerogative," are due primarily to the part of Lila, outdistances her material.

Muriel Rahn Takes Over Leading Role in "St. Louis Woman" Opening in N.Y

Afro-American Baltimore Md.
3-30-46

NEW YORK — Muriel Rahn, dramatic actress and erstwhile star of "Carmen Jones," will be seen on Broadway once again in another title role, when she opens as Della Green in "St. Louis Woman," the new musical play which has its premiere at the Martin Beck Theatre on Saturday evening, Mar. 30.

With its premiere twice postponed, the Arna Bontemps-Countee Cullen book will hit Broadway Saturday, following three weeks on the road where it played to good patronage in New Haven, Boston and Philadelphia.

Edward Gross, producer, engaged Miss Rahn to replace Ruby Hill after the Philadelphia closing. With scarcely 10 days to learn and prepare for the part, Miss Rahn steps into one of the most difficult roles in recent theatre history.

Anne Brown Auditioned

For a short while, according to the Associated Negro Press, the story circulated that Anne Brown, concert artist and featured player in "Porgy and Bess," had turned down an offer to play the title role.

3-30-46

"Actually, it is understood," reported, "Miss Brown's manager sought the part for her. She was auditioned in Boston, but was not considered suitable. There were also differences centering around salary and Miss Brown's concert commitments."

Under the direction of Rouben Mamoulian, sent from Hollywood by MGM studio, the play is now rehearsing with its new leading lady and the large cast headed by the Nicholas Brothers, Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram and June Hawkins.

Miss Rahn has won plaudits in several legitimate theatre roles, although her concert and opera career had over-shadowed her stage reputation until "Carmen Jones" brought her into the Broadway limelight. She acted and sang in "Come of Age" with Judith Anderson, and in "The Pirate" with Lunt and Fontanne.

Broadway Won't Like It . . .

"St. Louis Woman" Has Little Of Either Originality Or Charm

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va.
Sat 3-16-46

By THOMAS W. YOUNG

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—"St. Louis Woman" moves over to New York next week, but Broadway isn't likely to prove very hospitable unless the lady does a lot of changing of her manners and modes.

The nation's theatre capital doesn't take to phonies, no matter how gaudy and painted up they may be, particularly the shop-worn variety. And for all its fancy clothes and gay settings the new musical play, "St. Louis Woman," will take but little of originality and charm to the Main Stem.

The Nicholas Brothers, premier dance team, are a potential asset of which the producers apparently are not fully aware, for during the three hours of on-and-on entertainment only once are they featured in a demonstration of the skill for which they are best known.

Another semi-frozen asset of the Edward Gross production playing at the Shubert Theatre here is Pearl Bailey, deep-voiced commedienne who is one of the show's main props during some of its moments, but it seems as if her talents are only partially employed. Maybe that is because she has to carry a disproportionate share of the entertainment load.

THE STORY

Lest there be misgivings about the quality of Miss Bailey's performance and the audience's appreciation of it, we should record here that her singing of "Legalize My Name" along with the "Cake Walk" scene was a high spot in the show. Her other number "A Woman's Prerogative" was well received also. Yet more of the panto mime with which she embellished her numbers in Cab Calloway's Zanzibar show last year would have added so much.

"St. Louis Woman" is about Della Green who falls in love, after an easy career as mistress of Targee Street's most affluent saloon keepers and gamblers, with Little Augie, a high-riding jockey who spends his money as fast as he rides.

When Little Augie's luck runs bad and he goes broke, Della runs off with an upper-class gambler who has money to burn. Of course, Little Augie stages a comeback and gets in the big money again, so Della returns to him, presumable to live happily ever after.

Ruby Hill who plays Della is a native of Richmond and first came to light as soloist with Jesse Owens' ill-fated jazz band after his triumphant return from the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin. She and the role of "St. Louis Woman" are incompatible.

'St. Louis Woman' Offers Nothing Real

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

ST. LOUIS WOMAN, a musical, with music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Johnny Mercer, and book by Arna Bontemps and Countee Cullen. Produced by Edward Cross. At the Martin Beck.

A LOT of big names and original talent have gone into **St. Louis Woman**, but if the program didn't tell us we'd never know it.

This all-Negro musical perpetu-

ates the Negro stereotype. The When Biglow tries to revenge himself he is killed by Lila, an old girl friend he has spurned. Dying, he curses Little Augie, whose luck begins to change. Della Green, though she loves him, leaves Little Augie to help his luck. Little Augie returns to St. Louis after he has reestablished himself and enters the big handicap race to throw off the dead man's curse and win back Della Green.

Sun 3-24-46

Life of the negative," are due primarily to the way Pearl Bailey—a charming and talented performer—puts them over. Ruby Hill (Della Green) is truly beautiful with a fetching smile and a good voice. Harold Nicholas (Little Augie), one half of the Nicholas Brothers, plays with energy like a good vaudevillian. June Hawkins, in the very poorly written

Life of the real life
Nothing of the real life
Negro people as human be
life far more dramatic and
esting—is shown.

Harold Arlen and Johnny
came up with not one really good
song and the tune of "At Least That
Is My Opinion" is lifted from their
own hit tune "Accentuate the Positive."

"St. Louis Woman" Squabble Ends With Ingram-Nicholas Apologies To Muriel Rahn

New York Amsterdam News
New York, N.Y.

Broadway's historic, precedent setting "showdown" battle between Muriel Rahn on the one hand and Rex Ingram and Harold Nicholas on the other arising out of Miss Rahn's brief appearance in the cast of "St. Louis Woman," was settled amicably among the principals involved in the controversy here last week. Sat. 5-18-46

The settlement followed the receipt of Miss Rahn of an apology from Messrs Ingram and Nicholas, in which they denied having any intent to impugn the artistic abilities of the noted singer.

Cast Aspersions on Temperament

Miss Rahn had contended that statements made by the Messrs. Ingram and Nicholas before several in the cast of "Woman" cast aspersions on her temperament and impugned her artistic ability.

She sought redress before the council of Actors' Equity. That redress was to take the form of public censure to the actors whom she felt had wronged her from Equity on the basis of their action being irregular union behavior; an apology from the two men.

There had already been hearings before the Equity council. There was another hearing that promised to be quite explosive, with a number of witnesses appearing for both sides, scheduled for last Wednesday.

Finds Basis For Discussion

During the interim between the hearings, Clarence Derwent, incoming executive of the actors' union, talked to the three principals individually and discovered a basis on which discussions might be opened looking towards a settlement out of the hearing room. As a result of Derwent's intervention there was an exchange of letters between the principals. The letters were the Ingram-Nicholas apology and the Rahn acceptance. Following this acceptance Miss Rahn withdrew her action against the two men and the hatchet was buried. Sat 5-18-46

Meanwhile despite the difficulties "St. Louis Woman" has become a solid hit. Miss Rahn's contract which had until July to run is still in effect and therefore the singing star's feelings are being somewhat assuaged by her substantial weekly pay checks. In other words, everybody is happy once again and everything is hunky dory with "St. Louis Woman."

HAROLD NICHOLAS

Sat. 5-18-46

MURIE RAHN

REX INGRAM

Pearl's Hands Are $100,000 Items

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Pearl Bailey, the sensation of "St. Louis Woman," which opened in New York last month, is having her hands insured for $100,000, according to an interview with her in the May issue of Headlines and Pictures. This is because she sings with her expressive hands almost as much as with her throaty voice. Miss Bailey, who was born in Newport News, Va., was reared in Philadelphia, where her mother still lives, and came to New York after finishing high school.

Pearl Bailey

Sat 5-4-46

Miss Bailey already has had an offer from Hollywood but to date has not accepted because she thinks the movies make entertainers lazy. "I never want to get lazy. As long as I can keep going, good. When you slow down somebody's there to take your place," she explains.

Ingram Begs Off Equity Hearing to Get Witness

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

NEW YORK—Rex Ingram, chief witness in the celebrated "rebellion" of the cast of the Broadway musical "St. Louis Woman," asked for a postponement of the hearing of the charges filed against him by singer Muriel Rahn before the council of Actors' Equity when he appeared for the scheduled hearing last Wednesday.

Rex Ingra m

Ingram is being hauled into the Equity battle pit by Miss Rahn on her contention that it was he along with Harold Nicholas who provoked the cast to take its almost unprecedented action in refusing to continue to play their respective roles if the former "Carmen Jones" star continued in the cast.

4-27-46

The producers, of course, had no alternative but to ask Miss Rahn to withdraw from the role even though this action cost them a substantial sum. 4-27-46

Mr. Ingram asked that the hearing be postponed until Apr. 30 His reason for requesting the postponement was "because his most important witness was out of town."

Sat.

Dick Campbell, manager of Miss Rahn, acceded to the request but wryly observed that "all the witnesses in the case were in the cast presently playing at the Martin Beck Theatre, so it is quite intriguing that some witness should be unavailable."

Nicholas Bros. Signed For 1947

Amsterdam News

Sat 4-1-46

The Nicholas Brothers, featured leads in "St. Louis Woman," have signed contracts with Edward Gross for the continuation of their roles in the all-Negro musical hit at the Martin Beck Theatre for the season of 1946-47. N.Y.

Harold Nicholas plays the jockey in love with the lady of the title, while Fayard, another member of the team, acts the part of a rival jockey.

Others featured in the cast include Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, Ruby Hill, June Hawkins, and Juanita Hall.

The Messers. Nicholas have rejected several motion picture offers, as well as engagements in night clubs, in order to remain with the musical, in which they consider they have the best roles of their career.

Rahn-Ingram Feud Is Settled

Chicago Defender
Sat

'St. Louis Woman' Tilt Over

3-15-46

NEW YORK — Broadway's historic, precedent setting "showdown" Messrs. Ingram and Nicholas before which they denied having any intent to impugn the artistic abilities of the famous singing star.

Miss Rahn had contended that statements made by the Messrs. Ingram and Nicholas before several in the cast of "St. Louis Woman," was settled amicably among the principals involved in the controversy here last week. The settlement followed the receipt of an apology from Messrs. Ingram and Nicholas, in which they denied having any intent to impugn the artistic abilities of the noted singer.

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'ST. LOUIS WOMAN': A waiter in Biglow's Bar (Carrington Lewis) stands patiently by while three customers (Enid Williams, Betty Nichols and Gwendolyn Hale) make up their minds what to order in this scene from the popular musical at the Martin Beck. Miss Williams is the girl whose deadpan dancing helps make the show's cakewalk number the hit it is. *Photo by Vandamm*

'St. Louis Woman' Payroll Show Negro Actors On Better Wage

Baltimore Weekly
New Orleans Pa.

New York, June 19.—(ANP)—The financial returns for Negro actors and artists in the Broadway theatre has improved so that salaries now are equal if not in excess of those paid other Equity members, according to a study of the payroll and operating sheets of "St. Louis Woman", the musical hit which Edward Gross is presenting at the Martin Beck theatre.

The authors of the book of this musical are Arna Bontemps, librarian of Fisk University and the late Countee Cullen, and they draw weekly royalties in high figures, the same as those of Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer, who wrote the music and lyrics respectively. Mr. Cullen's share is turned over to his estate.

Among the featured players receiving high bracket salaries, some running into four figures are the Nicholas Brothers (Harold and Fayard), Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, Ruby Hill, June Hawkins, Juanita Hall and Robert Pope. Most of the other performers who act or are in the dancing and singing groups receive more than the minimum demand by Equity, states Producer Gross. In addition there are several members of the orchestra who are accomplished Negro musicians.

"We have a large cast," says Gross, "and our production is a costly one to operate, but it looks as if we will continue long after the summer. Our chief operating costs of course, are the salaries for the actors and royalties for authors. The audiences love the show—its charm and folk quality as well as the brilliant performances and the lilting melodies. It is gratifying to have achieved this result after the herculean work put into the making of a good show."

'ST. LOUIS WOMAN' TO CLOSE SATURDAY

Times New York N.Y.

Negro Show to Leave Beck After 113 Performances—

Wed. 7-3-46

'Dream Girl' Suspending

IN CAST OF MUSICAL

Ruth Crompton, who joins the company of "St. Louis Woman" at the Martin Beck Theatre on Monday, replacing June Hawkins.

By SAM ZOLOTOW

As indicated yesterday, trade in many of the Broadway theatres last week suffered so much of a decline that several more shows are reeling from heat prostration, in contrast to London, where business is booming. Forty or more houses are going full blast over there, with any number of attractions marking time in the provinces until theatres become available in the West End.

Locally, twenty-three entertainments are on the boards. This number will be further reduced at the end of the week by the closing of "St. Louis Woman" after the 113th performance at the Martin Beck and the suspension of "Dream Girl" at the Coronet until Sept. 2.

A Negro musical, "St. Louis Woman" was put on by Edward Gross, his second Broadway offering, with the backing of Arthur Freed and Sam Katz, Metro studio executives.

In preparing the show for its New York debut, Mr. Gross overcame a peck of difficulties. During the tryout Lemuel Ayers (designer of the scenery and costumes) bowed out as director and Antony Tudor as choreographer, their respective assignments being taken over by Rouben Mamoulian and Charles Walters. And just before the première a major cast switch found Ruby Hill in the part for which she was originally engaged. All in all, it was enough to test any producer's mettle, but Mr. Gross wasn't in the least bit discouraged. Heading the cast are the Nicholas Brothers, Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, Miss Hill, Robert Pope and Juanita Hall.

The plot of "St. Louis Woman" was borrowed from Arna Bontemps' novel of life in that metropolis at the turn of the century and was fashioned for the stage by Mr. Bontemps and the late poet, Countee Cullen. Harold Arlen did the music and Johnny Mercer the lyrics. 7-3-46

As for "Dream Girl," the Playwrights Company's presentation of the Elmer Rice comedy was a top-flight hit when it first opened last Dec. 14, with Betty Field starred. Not in the best of health, Miss Field was compelled to drop out occasionally, with Haila Stoddard substituting. When Miss Field left for a vacation, Miss Stoddard assumed the role. Miss Field is announced to return Sept. 2. A touring duplication, opening Aug. 19 in Detroit and Sept. 2 in Chicago, will have Judith Parrish as the lead.

—

Pearl Bailey's "Easy" Style Clicks on Broadway; Hollywood and Pictures Next

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 7-13-46

NEW YORK (ANP)—Out of the hours each night in "St. Louis Woman," however, to many critics she cast of "St. Louis Woman," Broadway musical which closed Saturday, a comparative newcomer to the stage seems headed for stardust.

She is Pearl Bailey, pretty, brown singing comedienne, who captured the house at every performance with a style of melody strictly her own.

Pearl Bailey's success seems keyed to her desire for simplicity and relaxation. The stage, she declares, is not as good for this as are night clubs and vaudeville.

She admitted "getting tired doing the same thing" for three

twinkle that makes you think that she's found life lots of fun. Comparied by several critics with Ethel Waters, she says the great blues classicist is her favorite singer, but declares she hasn't consciously followed any style.

Describes Others' Styles

Billie Holiday is the greatest stylist, she feels, and Ella Fitzgerald the greatest natural singer. "Ella styles them," she says sells them," Pearl enthusiastic notices she received. Booked I do is like telling a story to mu-sic, more like talking. I do songs a chorus for the theatre; sent to tie, she says, let her relax, and it that people know and then add my fetch him home to dinner, she was with his band that she first twist. It's got to be something that stayed on for "Amateur Night," a clicked. brings a chuckle. The audience en-joys it because it tells first prize and a $15 per week en-gagement.

Calloway's orchestra. This led to engagements in "The way I sing is the way I they know."

Up From Blue Angel

Although new to the stage, Pearl has been singing around the country, try for 12 years. She first attracted attention when she began work in the Blue Angel here about two years ago.

"I could relax there," she says "Ella styles them," Pearl enthusi-

Miss Bailey says with a Pearl appeared first at Philadel-Pennsylvania, vaudeville and night

66c 1946

THE PLAY

IN THE PLAY: *"I'm getting sick and tired of running 'round St. Louis trying to find you."*—**Pearl Bailey to Fayard Nicholas.**

ST. LOUIS WOMAN, a musical play in three acts. Book by Arna Bontemps and Countee Cullen, based on the former's novel, "God Sends Sunday." Music by Harold Arlen and lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Production directed by Rouben Mamoulian; dances by Charles Walters; scenery and costumes by Lemuel Ayers; musical director, Leon Leonardi; produced by Edward Gross. At the Martin Beck Theatre.

Badfoot	Robert Pope
Little Augie	Harold Nicholas
Barney	Fayard Nicholas
Lila	June Hawkins
Slim	Louis Sharp
Butterfly	Pearl Bailey
Della Green	Ruby Hill
Biglow Brown	Rex Ingram
Ragsdale	Harwood Smith
Pembroke	Merritt Smith
Jasper	Charles Welch
The Hostess	Maude Russell
Drum Major	J. Mardo Brown
Mississippi	Milton J. Williams
Dandy Dave	Frank Green
Leah	Juanita Hall
Jackie	Joseph Eady
Celestine	Yvonne Coleman
Piggie	Herbert Coleman
Joshua	Lorenzo Fuller
Mr. Hopkins	Milton Wood
Preacher	Creighton Thompson
Waiter	Carrington Lewis

By LEWIS NICHOLS

There are some nice things in "St. Louis Woman," which came to the Martin Beck on Saturday, but unfortunately there are not enough of them. Like Little Augie, its leading gentleman, the new musical play is troubled by a curse, in this case the plot. With a Negro company which quite probably could dance its way to heaven, and with costumes and the outward air of a carnival, "St. Louis Woman" prefers to remain conversational. On its list of contributors are such names as Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer, for music and lyrics, and Rouben Mamoulian as director, but they do not get the evening off the ground. The flesh is willing but the spirit is weak.

"St. Louis Woman" is an adaptation by Arna Bontemps and the late Countee Cullen of the former's novel, "God Sends Sunday." The year 1898 is the time, Little Augie is a jockey and the lady of the title is no better than she should be. The story tells of Augie's taking up with the St. Louis woman, the murder of her former friend, the deathbed curse which slows the jockey's horses. It is an everyday plot after the manner of "Frankie and Johnny", but the difficulty in the present case is that everyone takes it seriously. It goes blandly through all the usual steps, and is so heavy the best will in the world cannot lighten it.

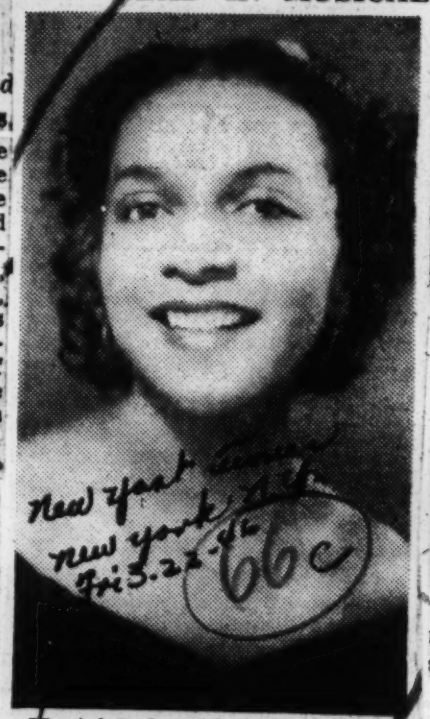
No doubt the basic trouble is that "St. Louis Woman" never fully decides what it wishes to be. Presumably the original design was to make a folk play of it, something on the order of "Porgy and Bess." The scenes being largely of saloons, cakewalk and carnival, take it away from folk opera and put it into the classification of musical comedy. When Augie's friends are dancing and singing, it is at times good musical comedy —but then it remembers its more serious purpose, and returns to the plot. It is a hybrid affair, and unfortunate.

* * *

There are some moments of lightness, however. A first-act cakewalk is fine; it is graceful, fast and understands the use of a climax. The final scene of the play also is staged in Mr. Mamoulian's best manner, and has the humor which, if the world were perfect, would run throughout. There also are some pleasant people taking part. A young lady named Pearl Bailey can sing a song so that it stays sung; although she is not imitating, her style is roughly on the order of Ethel Waters'. Ruby Hill is attractive as the St. Louis woman, and Harold Nicholas has a serene strut as Little Augie. Since one Nicholas Brother never is around without the other, Fayard also has a part; the Nicholas' dancing has not disintegrated with the passage of time.

No one expects Mr. Arlen to write a "Stormy Weather" every time he goes to the piano, but in truth his score for "St. Louis Woman" is not his best. An occasional air is catchy, but there are no great novelties. The blending of composer, lyricist and singer is reached completely only twice, when Miss Bailey cries down "Legalize My Name" and "A Woman's Prerogative." The orchestrations, by a large staff, are good. The settings and costumes by Lemuel Ayers also are very good. They have brightness and humor and obviously are ready to clothe a far brighter figure than that of "St. Louis Woman."

NEW LEAD IN MUSICAL



Muriel Rahn, who will appear in "St. Louis Woman," arriving at the Martin Beck March 30. She will have the role vacated by Ruby Hill.

Rex Ingram in 'St. Louis Woman'

PHILADELPHIA

Among the stars in the musical comedy, "St. Louis Woman," to open at the Shubert Theatre on Mar. 4, is Rex Ingram, who is famous on both the stage and screen.

He appeared in the screen versions of "The Green Pastures," "A Thousand and One Nights," "Dark Waters," "Huckleberry Finn," and "Cabin in the Sky," in which he had previously appeared as Lucifer Jr., on the stage.

Veteran Actor

He got his start as a professional actor in "Lulu Belle," which was produced by David Belasco. Ingram later had parts in "Porgy and Bess," "Once in a Lifetime," "Emperor Jones," "Sing Out the News," and "Going Home."

A four-letter man and holder of a Phi Beta Kappa key from Northwestern University, where he prepared to be a doctor, Ingram owes his success as an actor to the fact that he confined himself to straight acting, without dancing or singing.

Among other members in the cast of "St. Louis Woman" are Harold and Fayard Nicholas, known as the Nicholas Brothers; Ruby Hill, in the title role from which Lena Horne withdrew; Pearl Bailey; June Hawkins, last seen here in "Carmen Jones"; Juanita Hall and Robert Pope.

NEWCOMER GETS LEAD

Ruby Hill, who will act the title role in "St. Louis Woman" opposite Harold Nicholas.

Actors' "Rebellion" Forces Muriel Rahn Out of "Woman"

(Special to the AFRO)

NEW YORK—Charges that Muriel Rahn, former star of "Carmen Jones" and other Broadway productions, was forced out of the cast of "St. Louis Woman," and did not withdraw, will be filed with the Actors' Equity Association here this week, Dick Campbell, her manager-husband, told the AFRO on Monday.

The Arna Bontemps-Countee Cullen all-colored play opened here Saturday at the Martin Beck Theater with Ruby Hill, who originally played the role of Della Green on the road for four weeks, still in the leading feminine role.

Until Friday night, Miss Rahn, who had been signed to a run-of-the-play contract, had been announced for the title spot at a reported salary of $650 to June 1 and $750 to July 6, with the entire run netting her approximately $10,900.

"No Settlement"—Campbell

Reports that a settlement had been reached between Miss Rahn and Producer Edward Gross were denied by Mr. Campbell, who also stated that although a settlement had been offered, "Miss Rahn has not accepted and the matter is by no means ended."

In a full statement to the AFRO, Mr. Campbell had this to say:

"I want to make a simple statement in the leading feminine role against her, and on the contrary has been a perfect lady at all times while rehearsing with the cast.

"I think the entire situation can be summed up in a statement made by Harold Nicholas of the Nicholas Brothers, in the presence of the entire cast (about 45 people) when they met and discussed the situation Friday evening at the final rehearsal. Mr. Nicholas said, and I quote: 'I have nothing personal against Miss Rahn. It is just that she is too fine an actress. She overshadows me and makes me ill at ease.'

"The leaders of this 'rebellion' against Miss Rahn were Rex Ingram, Harold Nicholas, and several others who strung along with these two because they felt they had to back up the stars to protect their jobs.

Producer on a Spot

"We want it thoroughly understood that the producer, Edward Gross, and Reuban Mamoulian, the director of 'St. Louis Woman,' have made known to us that this

was not a matter of their doing. They explained to us that Ingram and Nicholas, with the others, had put them on the spot by asserting that if Muriel Rahn performed on opening, they would refuse to go on.

"Therefore, in order to protect their investment (about $200,000) and be assured of an opening night performance, they had to take the easiest way out and recall Miss Hill, who was replaced by Miss Rahn less than a week ago, to resume the role.

"A settlement of ten thousand dollars has been offered Miss Rahn by the producer. As yet, Miss Rahn has not accepted, and the matter is by no means ended."

"Simply Stunned"—Miss Rahn

"I'm simply stunned over the whole outcome," was Miss Rahn's only statement.

Mr. Campbell added: "It's incredible and unbelievable that such things could exist among actors in the theater."

The latter also quotes Producer Gross as saying "I'll never produce another all-colored play," following this outburst of dissension in the case of "St. Louis Woman."

Hail 'St. Louis Woman'

By NORA HOLT

"ST. LOUIS WOMAN," tinseled lady of the levee, who paraded her much discussed wares before a capacity first night audience in New Haven Thursday evening, emerged "the winnah" after a preliminary bout with the Society for the Prevention of Sin, and a main event with a pair of skillfull Broadway tunesmiths.

The society was disposed of with a left hook to the jaw and a count of ten. The clever tunesters drew a close decision, but she won on points of dramatic content, good casting, superb acting, and stirring moments of comedy, frustration and tragedy.

Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer, music and lyric writers, have fermented the show with good tunes. In fact they almost over-ran the first half with a lavish quantity of glorious collaborations. "Legalize My Name" so subtlely finger-tipped by Pearl Bailey, a new singing sensation, was a show-stopper, even though the text is post-dated and the music lighted by a catchy stop-rhythm reminiscent of an old Negro spiritual, "Dry Bones," so aptly used by Mercer in several of his latest hits.

PEARL BAILEY

Good Bit of Theatre

In substance, "St. Louis Woman" is as good a bit of theatre as we've seen in a long time. It imposes no moral turpitudes, nor apologizes for its locale. Preaches no sermon nor blushes for the iniquity of the men and women who pass in swift review. Instead it tells a story of life that makes you laugh, then tears out your heart in sympathy for the fallen woman who has always paid and will continue to pay.

The play opens with a brightly orchestra overture, short and stimulating, led by Leon Leonardi, a dynamic personality in the pit, who set the pace and kept orchestra and cast buoyant and steaming to the end. The first half was lively enough, but lacked sequential dialogue to carry through to the tensely dramatic climax. The authors have captured the true flavour of period and locale, and came out with some amusingly fresh blurbs, like Butterfly who remarked to her lover when he invited her into his room, "I ain't comin' in. I might loose by galhood." And the soloon theme, "Gimme Some Sweetnin' Water."

"St. Louis Woman" centers around Della, (Ruby Hill) a young beauty of the red-light district, who falls for little Auggie (Harold Nichols), a swaggering but decent-minded jockey. She was formerly the mistress of Biglow Brown (Rex Ingram), a blustering saloon keeper who has cast his real woman aside for a fresher love. Della clings to Auggie and spurns Biglow's pleas to remain his woman, whereupon he enters her home and shows her why he is called a woman beater. Little Auggie swears vengeance, follows Biglow to his saloon with a gun to kill him, but Lila (June Hawkins) the cast off, who sold her body in shame to put Biglow in business and buy him diamond rings, fires the shot that put him in his grave, although Auggie was blamed for the murder.

Singing Is Powerful

At the funeral, Lila is softened by the singing of the choir, the admonition of the preacher for all sinners to repent or reap the untimely and sinful death of Biglow, and confesses. The story unwinds the age-old, but ever present plot of love, jealousy, hatred and death, set in the environs of brothels and dens replete with the "Madame" and her girls, jockeys, barflys, semi-respectable girls like Butterfly, and gamblers.

Ruby Hill as Della, a free-lance woman of sin is lovely to look at, sings with a touch of nostalgia in her voice and reads her lines with a sob that makes one believe she has great potentialities as an actress. Harold Nicholas does some pleasing vocal work in "I Feel My Love Comin' Down" and "A Man's Gotta Fight," that almost matches his dancing for which he and his brother Fayard are notoriously famous. Both performed like old troupers of the legit stage.

For pure entertainment and enjoyment, you can list the name of Pearl Bailey in your tab book as the newest and most original interpreter of songs on the market today. She catches the nuances of words and music, and ingeniously blends them with delicate movements of hand and fingers that flash wraiths of ectoplasmic substances. The crowd gasps, then shouts in sheer joy at her uncanny bits of frippery.

Robert Pope, (Badfoot), sings with sliding honky-tonk tones as he croons the virtues of his protege, "Little Auggie is a Natural Man." June Hawkins gave a realistic portrayal of the injured woman and gripped the audience with the tensity of her dramatic action both in singing "True Love" and the denouncement of the man who done her wrong. Cast in the role of Biglow, the overbearing bully and flourishing pimp of the set, was Rex Ingram, who gave a fine performance, worthy of his many successful appearances on stage and screen. Others who made the music drama worth while production were, Juanita Hall as Leah, Creighton Thompson, the preacher, and Carrington Lewis, waiter.

Cake Walk Exciting

Because Arna Bontemps and the late Countee Cullen have laced together a moving dramatic play of Negro life in the bad lands of St. Louis, fresh with rich dialogue and mongrel quips of that locale and period is reason enough for its production. It impales no moral propaganda, except that the wages of sin are death.

The Cake Walk Scene, directed by Antony Tudor is an exciting sequence as was the funeral scene and the superb singing of the choral group. The transition, from the sinful love nest of Della to the innocent play of children just outside her door as they sang and danced the simple little Chickapin song, into which they caught her as a part of the game, was a delicate and sensitive piece of direction as conceived by Lemuel Ayers.

By the time "St. Louis Woman" has undergone the usual face lifting and weeding the wheat from the chaff, Edward Gross will no doubt have a Broadway hit on his hands, that portrays human beings as they are in sin or virtue, in St. Louis or Boise City, Idaho.

Muriel Rahn Gets Lead In Gross Play

Muriel Rahn, erstwhile star of "Carmen Jones," will be seen on Broadway once again in another title role when she opens as Della Green in "St. Louis Woman," the new musical play which has its premiere at the Martin Beck theater on Saturday evening, March 30. Edward Gross, producer of the forthcoming production has engaged Miss Rahn to replace Ruby Hill, who resigned from the role. Under the direction of Rouben Mamoulian, the play is now rehearsing with its new leading lady and the large cast headed by the Nicholas Brothers, Pearl Bailey, Rex Ingram, and June Hawkins.

Miss Rahn has won plaudits in several legitimate theater roles, although her concert and opera career had overshadowed her stage reputation until "Carmen Jones" brought her into the Broadway limelight. She acted and sang in "Come Of Age" with Judith Anderson, and in "The Pirate" with Lunt and Fontanne.

"St. Louis Woman" Riding on Phony Plot, Says Critic

By JOHN M. LEE

NEW YORK—It would have been a nice tribute to the memory of the late Countee Cullen if the play he adapted with Arna Bontemps from the latter's novel, "God Sends Sunday," had impressed its first night audience favorably, but the truth is, "St. Louis Woman" just didn't come off.

As a play it is a beautiful hodge podge that comes closer to being a thinly veiled vaudeville show than it does a musical, as was intended.

Shot through with a cargo of talent headed by the Nicholas Brothers, Rex Ingram and Pearl Bailey, the opus missed and fired then missed again as it struggled to come to life on the stage of the Martin Beck Theatre.

Beyond Musical Touch

Even the fabled genius of Rouben Mamoulian, director from the land of magic cameras, could not make you forget that "St. Louis Woman" had come to town riding upon another one of those phony folk-lore plots with singing and dancing breaking out all over the place. The original Bontemps story was laid in 1898, the play laid an egg in 1946.

Knowing the Nicholas Brothers as most of us do, it is easy to absolve them of any blame for the play's short-comings. this despite the fact that Harold was noticeably uncomfortable in his assignment as "Little Augie," the hard-riding fast-loving jockey. Those boys are dancers, and in that field they have no peers. Straight acting is something they haven't included in their repertoire.

Ruby Hill carried the title role on stage, and that's as far as it got. For sheer beauty, she was the prettiest spectacle behind the the footlights, but not many of us out front got a stronger impression of her than that.

No Competitive Talent

Movieland's Rex Ingram is the villainous saloon-keeper of the piece, and it is the hex he puts on "Little Augie" that is responsible for the goings-on. To say that he is the best actor in the play is only to say that he gave his usual excellent performance, this time with the added advantage of not having any serious competition.

Enid Williams, the dancer with a bright future, made the beautiful and nostalgic cake-walk number a high spot in the panorama with her solemn-faced mimicry.

Harold Arlen, who wrote "Stormy Weather," got less than a blessing from his muse this time. None of his songs are standouts, and it is the singing of Pearl Bailey that makes you feel that two or three of them will get by.

Pearl Bailey Outstanding

Miss Bailey who has a style all her own, but who can make you think of any great singer of songs you've heard, if you're in the mood for comparisons, breaks up the proceedings when she sings, "Legalize My Name."

Edward Gross, producer, got his people on stage in bright rich costumes, which for the most part, are in good taste. He gave them beautiful settings in which to work, and then he made one mistake; he should have called the production, "old-time" vaudeville with a modern touch."

It Just Keeps Rollin' Along

PM 1-7-46

PM Reviews

SHOW BOAT, a new production of the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein, 2d, operetta, based on Edna Ferber's novel, presented by Kern and Hammerstein at the Ziegfeld, with Jan Clayton, Ralph Dumke, Carol Bruce, Buddy Ebsen, Charles Fredricks, Kenneth Spencer, Colette Lyons, Ethel Owen and Pearl Primus; staged by Hassard Short; choreography by Helen Tamiris; settings by Howard Bay; costumes by Lucinda Ballard; musical direction by Edwin McArthur; orchestrations by Robert Russell Bennett.

No, our memories didn't lie. *Show Boat* is great stuff. The years have done very little to it; only here and there, in fact, have they caught up with it. As musicals go, it is full-bodied and full-flavored. The story may be all schmaltz and corn and hokum, full of romantic trappings and sentimental gestures and melodramatic flourishes. But it is all of a piece, and it holds your interest. More than that, it makes way for any amount of picturesque background and shifting period stuff—the color of the old river life, the razzle-dazzle of the Chicago World's Fair, the glitter of the music halls. It gives the scene-designer and costume designer their chance both to dabble in charm and wallow in wonderful bad taste. It gives the choreographer the chance to be gay and spirited, yet retain a cakewalk-and-cancan stylishness. And it gives the past the chance to be floridly nostalgic.

But of course the glory of *Show Boat* always was and always will be its music. Jerome Kern's score was quite possibly the best ever written for a musical comedy; it is certainly the best-wearing. Even *Ol' Man River*, which who hasn't heard at least once a week for the past 18 years, recaptures some of its plaintive sonority when Kenneth Spencer's bass voice first rolls it out. As for *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man, Only Make Believe, Bill* and *Why Do I Love You*, neither jukeboxes nor dance bands nor my own voice in the bathtub had done them any harm. They are fine songs. Even the songs I'd forgotten are pleasant ones. Unhappily, the one song in the show that doesn't add anything is the new one Mr. Kern had composed before his death.

A few small changes have been made for this production, but the only really noticeable one has come about through time itself. The stuff that was strictly contemporary in 1927 now has a period quality of its own. And for me, so did the music: at least it brought back the '20s, at moments, as all the hurly-burly of *Billion Dollar Baby* did not. The music, by the way, suffers by being rather awkwardly reprised during the last half hour of the show. That last half hour is, in fact, my only kick. Things somehow ran downhill and petered out.

* * *

Though not outstanding, the production is for the most part superior. Howard Bay has got some fun as well as much period color into the sets, and Lucinda Ballard has brightened things with her costumes. Miss Tamiris' dances seem to me, after the music, the best thing in the show. There is nothing the least fancy about them; they are just gay and lively and amusing, but they yet, many of them, have style. Primus, moreover, does some fine solo work.

As for the cast: Jan Clayton's Magnolia cannot have all the wistful charm of her Julie in *Carousel*, but she is right for the part. Charles Fredericks makes an easy, good looking Gay, and has a nice voice. If Ralph Dumke is less than the Capt. Andy of my memory, Buddy Ebsen is more than the Frank: he not only does some good soft-shoe, but he gives the whole show a lift with his personality. And there is Carol Bruce's very handsome Julie. As she sang *Bill*, the ghost of Helen Morgan couldn't help hovering about—for no one, perhaps, more than Miss Bruce. But I thought she sang it well, and so must the rest of the audience. They gave her the ovation of the evening.

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Jerome Kern's Memorable Songs Heard Again in 'Show Boat'

Daily Worker

by Samuel Sillen

THE late Jerome Kern performed a miracle of tune-making in **Show Boat.** For nearly 20 years America has been singing Ol' Man River, Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man, Only Make Believe, Bill, Why Do I Love You? These songs do not grow stale with repetition, and it is a joy to hear them once again in the current revival of the Kern-Hammerstein musical at the Ziegfeld Theatre.

Show Boat, based on Edna Ferber's novel, has become a "classic" of our musical theatre. Orginally produced by Florenz Ziegfeld in 1927, it was revived in 1932, presented in two movie versions, staged by numerous light opera companies throughout the country. It was a vehicle for Jules Bledsoe and Paul Robeson, who helped make Ol' Man River one of the best-loved songs of our time. 1-10-46

The new production has done ample justice to Kern's magnificent music. Lavishly conceived, the play enlists in its cast of 128 some of the best talents in the theatre today. With dances by Helen Tamiris and settings by Howard Bay, the new **Show Boat** sets off to advantage such stars as Kenneth Spencer, Carol Bruce, Pearl Primus and Jan Clayton.

No major changes have been made in either the text or music, the only important departure being a new and not especially distinguished song written by Jerome Kern shortly before his recent death. 1-10-46

The story, to be sure, is still nothing to cheer about; it proceeds unabashedly from platitude to platitude. The second part of the show, drenched in sentimentality, is a let-down from nearly every point of view. But on whole, this musical earns its reputation.

PEARL PRIMUS

The Negro artists account for a good part of the evening's success. Kenneth Spencer, following in the great tradition of Bledsoe and Robeson, wins prolonged applause for his Ol' Man River, which he sings with a depth of feeling that emphasizes the note of social protest in this eloquent song. Spencer's low tones have a wonderful clarity and resonance. One wishes he had a fuller part in the show. New York, N.Y.

And Pearl Primus does two especially fine dances, "No Shoes" and "Dance of the Dahomeys" in different moods. Miss Primus dances with an expressive vigor that completely captivates the audience. The entire Negro ensemble does a brilliant job.

It is good to find this production attempting to avoid stereotypes, within the framework of the Jimcrow locale for the story; but the story-pattern is by no means altogether satisfactory as a vehicle for a mixed company. Thursday

Whether Carol Bruce equals Helen Morgan as she sits on the piano singing "Bill" is a point that old-timers may care to debate; but Miss Bruce is appealing as the unhappy Julie and she puts the songs over. Jan Clayton, moving over from **Carousel** to play Magnolia in **Show Boat,** has lost none of her charm, and Charles Frederick is at once a dashing Gaylord Ravenal and a fine baritone. Ralph Dumke, as Captain Andy of the river-boat "Cotton Blossom," carries the comedy load on his substantial frame, while Buddy Ebsen and Collette Lyons make a refreshing comedy team.

The dances by Helen Tamiris very sensibly avoid showiness. They have wit and variety. Miss Tamiris does not go in for the super-colossal or the super-sophisticated. The creative simplicity of her designs brings us close to a folk idiom.

Howard Bay has designed some of the most striking sets I have yet seen on the musical stage. In keeping with the showman atmosphere of the book, he has given us the gawdy and flossy (as in the Midway of Chicago's 1893 World's Fair) as well as the shabby (as in the rented room on Ontario St.). With an apparently unlimited budget, Lucinda Ballard has costumed the players with colorful and imaginative extravagance. 1-10-46

Bue the show belongs as always to Jerome Kern in the first place. The entire production is a fitting tribute to one of the real music-masters of the modern American stage. It is pleasant to have it back under such good auspices.

New 'Show Boat' Is Called Proof Show's Best of Its Kind

Courier-Journal Louisville Ky.

1-13-46

By JACK O'BRIAN
Associated Press Drama Editor

NEW YORK, Jan. 12.—The week's big news is that the new production of "Show Boat" proves pretty completely that the famous Kern and Hammerstein musical play, produced first in 1927 by Florenz Ziegfeld, is the best musical production of its type in the history of the American theater, "Oklahoma!" notwithstanding. 1-13-46

In the first place, the score for "Show Boat" is indestructible. There are more hits to the hour in it than in any other show in memory. Jerome Kern won a permanent place in America's theater history by this score alone, even if he had not written so much other theater music.

New Tune Added

Oscar Hammerstein's book and lyrics, too, are contributions of major importance. Hammerstein did a little work on the book in order to remove any dated tone, and the result is a complete delight. Kern wrote one new tune for this production just before he died, a lively lilt called "Nobody Else But Me." It is the only major change from the 1927 Ziegfeld musical, and this change was made simply because, in the original, the late Norma Terris had given imitations of stars of the 20's in that spot and something else was needed.

Visually, this new production is breath-taking. I have it on the word of Emil Friedlander, owner of Dazien's, a firm which supplied fabrics to both the original and the one now delighting fans at the Ziegfeld Theater, that the physical production is by far more beautiful than the original. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer permitted Hammerstein to pour $300,000 of its money into "Show Boat," and for a change this sort of extravagant Broadway expenditure has not been poured down a drain pipe, but into something which runs a pretty good chance, for sheer beauty, with the Taj Mahal.

There are 14 sets, one more tastefully mammoth than the other. The costumes are once distinctively riotous, then delicately restrained. The colors are brilliant or soft as occasion demands, and always with a fine hand controlling the lighting which turns it into a visual delight, the like of which I haven't seen equalled in 20 years of theatergoing.

Carol Bruce

Cast Excellent

The cast does excellent work, considering the nostalgic aura which surrounded the original players. Despite such a brilliant picture as the memory of the late Helen Morgan arouses, Carol Bruce manages a deeply moving performance as "Julie"; her singing of "My Bill" is the highlight of the show. As "Joe," Kenneth Spencer did not come off quite so well opening night, singing "Old Man River" off key once or twice in the high register, but that almost surely was nervousness.

As "Magnolia," Jan Clayton is excellent, both as an actress, singer and occasional comedienne. Ralph Dumke disappointed me completely as "Captain Andy," the role which made Charles Winninger famous. Buddy Ebsen and Colette Lyons, as Frank and Ellie, performed more than adequately. Charles Fredericks is a stiff "Ravenal," but with a good voice, and the "Parthy Ann Hawks" of Ethel Owen clearly derived from the original as played by the late Edna May Oliver.

Credit must go, too, to Edna Ferber for writing the original novel which gives the stage a chance to present a musical play of such sweeping visual and musical stature. In a word—great.

To report briefly on two other Broadway premieres: "The Desert Song" came to City Center for a limited run. It is, with modern gag-writing additions to the book, a corny, near-Minsky affair whose largest attraction remains the Romberg-Hammerstein score; the same Hammerstein who produced and wrote "Show Boat," making it quite definitely an Oscar Hammerstein second week. Walter Cassel and Dorothy Sandlin are starred in the sort of overstuffed operetta which ages badly.

Premiere Danseuse. Pearl Primus, who provides many thrills in "Show Boat" with her exciting dance routines.

Primus, Spencer Shine In Thrilling "Show Boat"

The Courier-Journal Louisville Ky.
New York N.Y.

Eighteen years after it first dazzled Broadway with its magnificence, the third New York revival of "Show Boat" hit the Great White Way Saturday night with an impact which almost rocked the beautiful Ziegfeld Theatre from its sturdy foundations and most certainly stripped first nighters of their armor of cool sophistication. At several high spots this reviewer heard insistent bravos and real plebeian clamor for encores despite sable top hats and diamond necklaces which were much in evidence.

There are many reasons for the phenomenal success of this musical with its almost immortal melodies by Jerome Kern, book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, II, and brilliant staging by Hassard Short. First and foremost, it is a real American saga; and second, the producers have always been daring, yet careful in their choosing of the leads.

In 1927, it was the late Jules Bledsoe who sang the "Ol' Man River" role into show history. A few seasons later, it was Paul Robeson whose deep, dark voice gave the song gusto and life. And now it is Kenneth Spencer, whose stature as a singer and actor is growing by leaps and bounds, who wins the first real applause of the show with his virile interpretation of the song. 1-12-46

And something new has been added to the present streamlined version of "Showboat." It is Pearl Primus in the dual roles of Sal and the Dahomey Queen, whose rich, dark beauty provides the real sensation of the evening with her absolutely superb dancing. Never has she been so vital—so powerful—so thrilling as she is in this—her first Broadway show. She and her troupe, including the lithesome and talented Talley Beatty and Claude Merchant, give the production real ballet.

The greatest thrill of the show to this reviewer, was, however, the intriguing contest between the white and Negro dancers which finally culminated in a perfect blending of the two lines. It is a real symphony of the modern dance, with it being almost imposible for the eye to determine where the Negro dancer begins and the white dancer ends. Hosannas also go to Carol Bruce, who had the difficult job of singing the role of Julie, the mulatto girl, which, singularly, has always seemed to be the private property of the late Helen Morgan, whose singing of "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man" and "Bill" sent her to the top of the heap when she appeared in the original "Show Boat." Not only did Rubber Face (one of the few who appeared in the original cast), Charles Fredericks as Gaylor Ravenal, Jan Clayton as Magnolia and Ethel Owen as Parthy Ann Hawks, particularly with her interpretation of "Bill." 1-12-46

Others who gave more than noteworthy performances included Helen Dowdy, who, to this reviewer, was all of which adds up to that if the present "Show Boat" only lasts ten years on Broadway, it will be a short run—Marvel Cooke.

'SHOW BOAT'

A Famous Musical Receives a Welcome as It Comes Back Home

By LEWIS NICHOLS

THE big theatre news of the week, and in a way it will be that of the season, was the return of "Show Boat." When the Cotton Blossom, with full complement of actors, gamblers and roustabouts, tied itself to the levee of the Ziegfeld, the occasion was much more than just a revival of an old musical play. For "Show Boat" stands in a class pretty much by itself; its reputation borders, if it is not firmly fixed upon, the unique. When it was first shown during the Twenties it numbered friends in the tens of thousands and it has since lost none of them. It has seen one previous revival, it has formed the basis for a screen version and a radio program, and the lovely Kern score has been played so often its welcome might easily have worn thin. But that is not the way of "Show Boat." Repetition has served only to fix the memory and increase the hope that one day a distant whistle would announce the Cotton Blossom's return upriver.

The opening, a week ago last evening, was mistily nostalgic and quite in the mood of "Show Boat." There were players from earlier versions present in the audience, and no doubt players who would have liked to be on the stage. Away from the metallic glitter which is part of an opening night group were nonprofessional theatregoers come to see a favorite musical for the third, fourth or fifth time. Scattered through the house were even some of the doubters named Thomas, for the Twenties were a long while ago and the young are disinclined to believe what their parents tell them about great shows. An opening night audience in New York has the reputation of being hard to live with, of sitting with a sneer and daring the performers to offer entertainment. This was not true for that at "Show Boat"; instead, it dared the performers not to be good. Had Kenneth Spencer failed to do right by "Ol' Man River," the first four rows of the orchestra would have climbed to the stage and hanged him to the side of the Cotton Blossom. Mr. Spencer is alive today.

Deserves Its Fame

And in the cold reason of the greater part of a week afterward "Show Boat" fully deserves its friends and its renown. It has a little of everything. To the musical version of Edna Ferber's novel, the late Mr. Kern gave his greatest score, and to that score Oscar Hammerstein 2d added lyrics which do not date. "Show Boat" has sadness and gaiety, melodrama, color and rumor. The play runs down like a clock near the end, to be sure, but it has been some months now since perfection was universal, and "Show Boat" doesn't do badly. The present production avoids one of the gorier pitfalls which lie awaiting revivals—that of "bringing the play up to date," with the slang of the Forties and present-day allusions. "Show Boat" needs no such second-rate paint, and Mr. Hammerstein, who was in charge following the death of the composer, was well aware of it. Only one or two minor incidents of the evening have departed, and in their places is a new song, the last Mr. Kern wrote, called "Nobody Else But Me."

Mr. Spencer as Joe

Kenneth Spencer has been mentioned. In the part of Joe he sings the most famous of the songs of "Show Boat," and it is a tribute to both the singer and the casting that he ranks well up with both Jules Bledsoe of the first production and Paul Robeson of the earlier revival. Carol Bruce follows the late Helen Morgan as Julie, the lady who from the top of a piano sings "Bill." She does not try to imitate her predecessor, but simply gives it in her own way. As Magnolia and Magnolia's daughter, Kim, there is Jan Clayton. Her singing voice is good, although there has been some dissension about her manner of speaking the lines. The other major parts are played by Charles Fredericks as Gaylord, Ralph Dumke as Captain Andy, Ethel Owen as Parthy Ann Hawks. There will be Dumke followers just as there were Charles Winninger followers; in this particular musical the quality of interpretations are a matter of opinion, based not seldom only on recollection.

Colorful Production

Since the Cotton Blossom floats most easily in the full sweep of the river, the present production is all but a flood of color, players, dancers and lights. Howard Bay has offered a picturesque background, and Lucinda Ballard has designed excellent costumes which are brighter than even the truest memory of the original. Helen Tamiris' dances are lively, with Pearl Primus and Laverne French, among others, taking part, and the choruses sing the songs with the respect and good feeling that is due them. This obviously is to be a "Show Boat" year, as were 1927 and 1932, and it is clear that whatever else may have gone on in what "Billion Dollar Baby" calls the "Terrific Twenties," they knew about writing musical shows then. Nineteen Fifty-six may be a "Show Boat" year also, and Gaylord Ravenal, the gambler, could lay safe odds that will be a welcome production also. "Show Boat" is here to stay.

Graphic House

DUMKE & BRUCE
The '20s through the ear, the '90s through the eye.

LYONS & EBSEN

JAN CLAYTON

Old Musical in Manhattan

Show Boat (music by Jerome Kern; lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II; book adapted by Mr. Hammerstein from Edna Ferber's novel) is still one of the most satisfying of all musicals. Few shows can boast a more delightful score. Instead of seeming dated after 18 years, *Show Boat* is merely very nostalgic: it brings back the '20s through the ear and the '90s through the eye.

It isn't as if such tunes as *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man, Bill, Only Make Believe,* have ever really waned in popularity—and *Ol' Man River* has become more famous than most folk songs. Back in their original places, the tunes have almost all their original pull. One new song, *Nobody Else but Me,* which Composer Kern wrote before his death last fall finds itself in too fast company.

The romantic hokum of *Show Boat's* well-known story—with its dashing gambler, its deserted young wife who troupes to stardom, its pretty mulatto who tries to "pass"—calls up the color of Mississippi River life, of the 1893 World's Fair, of grimy furnished rooms and glittering music halls. It fetches up a lot of gay, happy dancing, much of it with a period touch of cancans and cakewalks. Only toward the end of the show, when the plot runs down, does the *Show Boat* revival lose its lure.

Thanks to Howard Bay's sets, it never loses its looks. Jan Clayton (*Carousel*) proves a winning Magnolia, Colette Lyons an agreeable Ellie, Buddy Ebsen a live dancing personality and Ralph Dumke a jovial Captain Andy. And handsome Carol Bruce, tackling the *Bill* that made the late Helen Morgan famous, brought down the opening-night house.

'Showboat' Is Back With Bang

NEW YORK — (ANP) — Ghosts of great performers haunt the Ziegfeld Theater stage and wings at every performance of the revived "Showboat." On this same stage the incomparable Helen Morgan, Edna May Oliver and Jules Bledsoe won undying fame for their portrayals of roles in Edna Ferber's warm story as they sang Jerome Kern's music. All three, stars in the original production, have passed on, as have Ziegfeld and Kern. New stars are in their places and Bledsoe's role of "Joe" is being capably taken care of by Kenneth Spencer. But every time Spencer steps to the front of the stage and begins "Ol' Man River" the audiences which saw the original production, think of the night Bledsoe received a thunderous ovation upon completion of the song.

Behind that was a story. Bledsoe, a musician of no little ability, felt that Mr. Kern's finale was not crashing. So he suggested a change to the orchestra leader. When Kern heard the new version, he was incensed and raised a big fuss. Ziegfeld came in just as the argument was at its height and asked the cause. He was told and ordered the orchestra to play the number both ways. He accepted Bledsoe's change and Kern left the theater in a huff.

Langston Hughes' Show Will Make Philly Bow

The Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa.
66c

NEW YORK CITY—The new dramatic musical, "Street Scene," made from the Elmer Rice Pulitzer prize winer of the same name, is scheduled to have its initial performance in Philadelphia at the Shubert Theater, next Monday evening. Not since the early 1900's, when Paul Lawrence Dunbar and James Weldon Johnson were writing music for Broadway shows, has there been a non-Negro musical with lyrics by a Negro songwriter. "Street Scene's" lyrics are by the internationally famous poet and playwright, Langston Hughes.

Heading a company of sixty players are Anne Jeffreys of the films, Polyna Stoska of the New York City Center Civic Opera Company, the comedienne Hope Emerson, Norman Corwin and Richard Manning of the Metropolitan Opera House. The four colored actors in the cast are Creighton Thompson, Juanita Hall, Wilson Woodbeck, and Helen Ferguson. There is a large orchestra and a group of dancers. Sat. 12-14-46

Under the auspices of Dwight Deere Wiman, in association with the Playrights' Company, the opus is scheduled to come to Broadway early in January.

Choose 4 Negroes For 'Street Scene'

Daily Worker
Oklahoma City, Okla.

NEW YORK — (ANP) — Four Negroes have been chosen for the cast of the musical version of Elmer Rice's "Street Scene" scheduled to open in New York the first of 1947. Creighton Thomas has the principal Negro role, and others chosen are Juanita Hall, Wilson Woodbeck, and Helen Ferguson. Sat. 12-7-46

Other principals in the cast are: Anne Jeffreys, Polyna Stoska of the Civic Opera; Richard Manning of the Metropolitan Opera; Eve Arden, and Hope Emerson. Charles Friedman, director of "Carmen Jones," "Sing Out The News," "Pins and Needles," is directing the show, which will have its preview in Philadelphia on Dec. 16.

There is no sterotyped casting of Negro actors in the roles.

Here To Yonder

Defender
Chicago, Ill.

Langston Hughes

(Street Scene) 66c

THIS PAST WEEK has been the busiest week of my life—just as this year, 1946, has been my busiest year. Reason: I have been working in the theatre for the last 14 months bringing to life the lyrics for a new musical show. Now, that show is about to come alive on the stage. We are in the final week of rehearsals. That's why this is my busiest week.

There are half a dozen other reasons, too, why this is the busiest week in all the years I have lived. One is that I had to turn in to the publishers, after a final reading and some unexpected revisions, the manuscript of Jacques Roumain's beautiful Haitian novel that Dr. Mercer Cook and I have translated. Another is that the postponement of the rehearsals of my show from August to November made the final week of preparations conflict with my fall lecture trips.

So this week between rehearsals (and missing rehearsals) I have been in Boston for the Ford Hall Forum, in Trenton, N. J., for the State Teachers College morning assembly and in the evening for the Phalanx Fraternity, then down to Virginia for Lynchburg college, two programs—their first Negro assembly speaker. Sat. 12-21-46

A year ago last August when the Playwrights Company asked me if I would be interested in doing the lyrics for a musical version of STREET SCENE I was, of course, delighted. I had seen the famous Elmer Rice Pulitzer Prize Play in New York back in the depression days. Later I had been thrilled by its movie version with Sylvia Sidney and Estelle Taylor. STREET SCENE is a moving drama of life on the sidewalks in front of a New York tenement—therefore right down my alley. I have lived in plenty of tenements myself.

Work on Script All Summer

ALL SUMMER LONG Elmer Rice, Kurt Weill, the director Charles Friedman and I labored getting the script into final shape so that there might be a minimum of changes during rehearsals. Kurt Weill worked over his beautiful music that gives wings and melody to my lyrics. Lina Abarbanell, the casting director of the Dwight Deere Wiman office, auditioned and interviewed hundreds of singing actors for the various roles. The business managers drew up budgets and arranged theatre bookings. I learned how many many weeks of collective effort goes into the making of a Broadway show preceding its rehearsals.

In early November there gathered for the first rehearsal a cast including such excellent singing performers as Anne Jeffreys of the movies, Norman Cordon of the Metropolitan Opera, Polyna Stoska of the New York Civic Opera, and the comedienne, Hope Emerson of the stage and night clubs. Of the 60 persons crowding the sidewalks of STREET SCENE there are four colored actors. (It is a mixed cast—but not very mixed since the residents of the tenement house of the plot are Irish, Italian, Swedish, and just plain white Americans.) The Negro actors are Creighton Thompson, Juanita Hall, Wilson Woodbeck, and a charming child named Helen Ferguson.

For five weeks actors, the director, and the stage managers have worked bringing STREET SCENE to visual life. A large orchestra under Maurice Abravanel has rehearsed the music. Author, composer, and myself as lyricist have made last minute improvements. Now we await the rising of the first curtain at Philadelphia's Shubert Theatre to see what the public and the critics will think of our two hour show that is the result of thousands of hours of collective work over a period of many months.

Attention, Hopefuls! Jo Baker Has Found Husband Number 4, She Sought

Defender Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 12-14-46

TO WED 4TH TIME

JO BAKER
Stage star and "Toast of Paris" will march to the altar for the fourth time when she becomes Mrs. Jo Bouillon some time this winter. Bouillon is leader of a famous French orchestra.

Announcement Nullifies Ads Published In The Various American Publications Requesting 'Candidates' To Submit Their Qualifications

PARIS — Josephine Baker, "The Toast of Paris" for more than 20 years, and the leading stage and film star since her arrival over here will be married to Jo Bouillon, white leader of a French orchestra it was announced this week.

This will be Miss Baker's fourth trip to the altar and the first for her 40-year-old husband-to-be.

Miss Baker's ascension to the top prior to the war was phenomenal. Back in the United States she left St. Louis, Mo. shortly after her marriage to Billy Baker of Chicago, to become a chorine in "Shuffle Along" a position she held during the run of that show produced by Miller and Lyles, Sissle and Blake.

Although a chorus girl she attracted considerable attention with her mugging and unique hoofing, critics' labeling her one of the show's stars. When "Shuffle Along" broke up she went with Sissle and Blakes' own production of "In Bamville" which ran in opposition to Miller and Lyle's newly formed production, "Running Wild." When this new Sissle and Blake musical closed Miss Baker joined a troup that headed for Paris. She remained with the European cast for one season and then set out as a solo artist. Her famous "Banana Dance" became the talk of the continent and Miss Baker the toast of all Europe.

During the conquest of Europe she was married to the late Count Abatino from whom she was divorced a few years later. She next married Jean Lion whom she divorced in the early '30s.

Miss Baker made her first trip back to the U. S. while married to Lion, the two coming here to open a night club in New York. This promotion didn't do very well, however, and soon closed. No club received the publicity that accompanied the opening of Josephine's nightery. The Metropolitan press carried front page stories of its opening, but even so publicized, the club closed after a few nights' run.

No date has been set for Miss Baker's coming marriage but the couple will visit South America in April, Bouillon said, which indicates the wedding will take place before spring. Prior to this announcement it was understood that Miss Baker's next marriage would be to an American Negro. She had asked newspapers to print her request for such a mate. Several aspirants replied to the ad through this paper, but apparently none qualified. 12-14-46

Still Dancing. JOSEPHINE BAKER, 39, dancer, the rage of Paris in the '20s, is on tour again. After a month in Stockholm, where she is now, she will go to England

International

Josephine Baker, arriving in Stockholm

and Italy. During the war, she entertained troops in Africa, making her home there until France was liberated.

Josephine Baker, golden brown toast of prewar Paris music halls, was in a Neuilly hospital, making slow recovery from an intestinal ailment. She had a new piece of finery: a Medal of Resistance, with Rosette, given her for aiding French Intelligence in Lisbon and North Africa early in the war.

Chicago, Ill. Mon. 10-28-46

Josephine Baker Critically Ill In Paris, France

Chicago, Ill.

Sat. 7-20-46

PARIS, France — Following an emergency abdominal operation here, music hall artiste Josephine Baker, was reported critically ill in a local hospital.

Miss Baker, cafe favorite of European audiences for the last 20 years, was stricken ill while touring North Africa with a musical show. She was flown here from Rabat, Morocco, in an ambulance plane.

Born in St. Louis, Mo., in 1907, Jo made her first stage appearance in a Harlem night club when she was eight. Years later she gained international fame in Paris as a torch singer at the Follies Bergere.

In 1942 she was reported to have died in poverty from tuberculosis in Portugal. Next day, however, a friend disclosed she was convalescing in a Casablanca nursing home. Miss Baker entertained troops throughout Europe.

Jo Baker Received By Eager Audience At Palais de Chaillot

Informer Boston Globe Sat. 6-22-46

By ELGIN HYCHEW

(Our Foreign Correspondent)

PARIS.—Paris bowed to Actress Josephine Baker this week at the Palais de Chaillot as the former toast of Europe returned triumphantly to recapture this city in the first of a series of stage successes since before the war.

An audience of nearly 10,000 spectators were on hand at the celebrated music shrine where Miss Baker was the main attraction in a music festival featuring the Grand National Symphony orchestra of Radio France and a chorus of ballet dancers.

Seats from $3 to $14 were occupied by French dignitaries, diplomats and the common Frenchman. President Felix Gouin, of the Provisional Government of the French Republic was also on hand. Miss Baker, beautuous and vivacious, still proves her versatility by bringing out the SRO signs in her one-night appearances in the Paris concert halls. The American-French Negro actress capably uses a technique all of her own to combine both force of personality and her talents in sophisticated roles which are all quite opposite to her earlier ones.

Her charm, singing, dancing and comedy make her the showhand of old times. Employing her agile and nimble manner of winning such a thing as a cold and stolid French audience and sitting it on its head with rhythm, necessitate the command of cleverness and dexterity on the part of some artists, but with Jo' Baker its' only a natural.

Informer

Supporting her is a 15-piece jazz band, which is reputed as being the best in France. It engrosses a section and a rhythm department which are well-balanced by two grand pianos that played loud and swingy. In the Baker combo are artistic fingers on one keyboard which tackle even the most intricate passages and the treatment of them, are typical of Duke Ellington.

Miss Baker is comedienne, impersonator, songstress, dancer, musician and fun-maker all in her one-woman show.

It was probably sheer stupidity but a natural for this correspondent to expect the usual portrayals by a Negro to be Negroid in character. This time this writer was disappointed. At times Miss Baker actually gets down to honest-to-goodness "clowning" to make her point and to move her listeners to tears, laughter and to provoke thought, but the actress never employs the old sterotyped means of entertaining which are often labeled as being typically Negroid.

6-22-46

No Strip

Her freshness in the portrayal and the imitation of many peoples of many races, embraces two extremities—from the gay lady to the mistress of mansion. The Parisienne star sings, dances and nimics to give admirers a true impression of the "Gaisha Girl" and the American ballroom woman, but the star never does a strip.

A striking, yet vivid imitation of leading ladies in waitng a century ago, was that of the 19th Englsh lady in her living room playing the hardsichord in lovely costumes appropriate of that period. Because of her stage personality, it can be easily said and noted that one even forgets that the star is a Negro during the big moments of action before the lights. It can be accepted as a belief that a Negro woman, except as a servant, did not even as much enter the century living room, save being the house mistress or the lady in waiting.

This, an applause ringer at every Baker performance which is usually a lily-white audience, is a living tribute to black womanhood!

6-22-46

Flitting across the stage in gay colored gaudy French fashions of the 90's in backs and bussels while a decrept white man toddles along behind and watches her petticoat with fond admiration, and then to see Miss Baker do a quick an about face to hoist her flowing ruffled skirt to expose her underlace and drawer strings, could never have happened on a Dixie stage, behind Dixie footlights.

Or to see white "casanovas" vie among themselves to fondle with her soft and tender brown hands and then kiss them gently, would cause a riot down Memphis way and other entertainment centers below the Mason-Dixie boundary.

The French have an expression for it—"snap and expression."

Her sparkling wardrobe is an eye-brow-lifter for the most pretentious Hollywood fashion expert.

Just returning to civilian status Miss Baker held the rang of Captain in the French WAC and entertained Allied military personnel in the African, Mediterranean and the European theatres. Her final appearance with an American cast was that with Noble Sissle and his revived edition of "Shuffle Along" which recently returned to the States after a long tour of installations and camps in Belgium, Austria, Germany and France. For soldiers who were on hand it was a great show and a treat to see an American French Negro celebrity who defied the American racialisms and social patterns and remained in a free country for better opportunity but for Miss Baker it was a re-union of some of the original members of "Shuffle" of which Miss Baker and Sissle were firsts among the first edition which came to Europe. Old troupers recall the days when Jo Baker and the late Florence Mills stormed Paris back in the late twenties and the early thirties when "Shuffle" and "Blackbirds" shocked Europe.

6-22-46

Sat.

With a heavy schedule already ahead, Miss Baker plans to come to America on a short visit, but her commitments will delay. 6-20-46

France Decorates Ths Afro-American Josephine Baker

Baltimore, Md.

NEUILLY, France — Still confined to her hospital room at the Clinique Ambroise-Pare here, Miss Josephine Baker, American actress and singer, recently was presented the Cross of Liberation, with rosette, in recognition of her wartime service to her adopted country.

The presentation was made by Colonel de Boissoudy in the presence of many of France's military and political leaders. Sat.

They included Mme. Eugenie Eboue, French deputy and widow of the governor general of French Equatorial Africa; General and Madame Bouscat, Madame de Boissieu, General de Gaulle's daughter; Jo Bouillon, the bandleader; and General Juin's representative.

Rare Service Rewarded

In making the presentation, Colonel de Boissoudy pointed out that very few persons have been given the decoration "with rosette," the black and red ribbon indicating that service has been exceptional enough to merit official

Ths Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

PARIS (ANP)—Miss Josephine Baker, idol of the French stage, was recently decorated in Neuilly hospital by officials for Miss Baker to receive the commendation in her private room at a clinic where she got out of the military authorities while recovering from a severe illness.

Now feeling much better, Miss Baker has been declared out of danger by Professor Bergeret, one of France's leading physicians, who returned to permitted her to get out of bed for 15 minutes during the week of the presentation.

10-26-46

In accepting the Cross, Miss Baker said, "I want my people to know in America that I'm very glad to have been decorated, for myself and for the whole race." Miss Baker, who returned from Africa after an operation was declared "urgent," has been undergoing treatment for an intestinal-chirurgical disease in France. Sat. 10-19-46

Special permission was granted

Josephine Baker Gets French Military Award

Specialist Quits Vacation to Aid Josephine Baker

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 9-21-46

By EDGAR A. WIGGINS

PARIS (ANP)—Josephine Baker, internationally famous dancer, was given a third operation here last week for dysentery at the Ambroise Pare, a private clinic, following a sudden relapse.

Dr. A. Bergeret, eminent specialist, was compelled to return from his vacation to administer the operation and another blood transfusion. He has been her attending physician since her arrival here more than two months ago by plane from Morocco.

This was the second time Miss Baker has been stricken by dysentey in Morocco. Due to the foods and fruits of Morocco, many foreigners nave been stricken by the intestinal disease. Her last attack was on July 4, the day before she was to entertain American soldiers at Port Lyautey. Her first attack was two years ago.

Miss Baker has canceled all plans to rehearse for a new Folies Bergere review this fall, she told me when I visited her hospital room in Neuilly. Her condition improved since the third operation, hospital reports disclose.

Miss Baker Denies Marrying Frenchman

PARIS (ANP) — Miss Josephine Baker does not plan to marry Jo Bouillon, the French bandleader, as several newspapers reported last week but is still interested in marrying a colored American.

The noted artist expressed surprise and unconcealed amusement when she read the newspaper accounts of her proposed marriage to Bouillon, who has been publicized as dead but is reported to be in Italy for a svnthetic operation.

3rd Mate to Be American Actress Jo Baker Says

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

By EDGAR A. WIGGINS

PARIS — (ANP) — Josephine Baker, renowned stage and screen star, twice married and twice-divorced—to an Italian count and a French millionaire, respectively—free at 40, and convalescing from a recent illness, has decided on another trip to the altar, but this time with a colored man.

This secret of Miss Baker's ambition was revealed last week during a two-hour discussion with the celebrated artist in the blue Paris by train.

Wants American Husband

"I can tell this to you," she said, "because we have much in common, but French newspaper men would not understand. Ther too, I want to marry an American of our own race; one who will care for me and manage my affairs." The Afro-American

Miss Baker has lived abroad for 20 years. Her charm, personality and artistry have captivated the hearts of millions of people of all classes, and made her the most outstanding and idolized of all female stars in France, and other countries around the globe.

Seeks Race Progress

Her success, resulting from hard work and sacrifices, has compensated, to an extent, her incessant efforts and ambition, but the driving factor behind her, was her determination to do something that would be a real credit to the race. Baltimore, Md.

"God has spared my life for some reason," said Miss Baker, who nearly died during recent months, "and I believe that reason is for me to realize the greatest ambition of my life: To do a lot for race progress and elevation." Sat. 11-9-46

As a result, Miss Baker has decided to devote her life, and her resources, to be a real champion of the cause.

Racial Unity Needed

In this crucial post-war period the opinion is shared that now, more than ever, greater unity, understanding and collaboration among colored people should prevail; that competent leadership, and unselfish individuals, in all friends of endeavor are essential.

In her sphere of activities, Miss Baker has plans, not only for the importation of bands, shows, and artists for the French stage and screen, but also for building her own theatre and motion picture studio.

The studio is to be run by all colored executives and technicians. Principal matter on the agenda today, however, is the announcement: "Husband Wanted, for Josephine Baker." Men under 40 need not answer.

Needed Qualifications

Miss Baker insists on having a husband her own age or older; he must be intelligent, of good conduct, character and appearance; and chivalrous. Efficient as a business manager, will to live in France and 100% or (1000% as Miss Baker claims herself) for the race.

All applicants: Please send a photo of yourself with your letter, giving authentic information about yourself. Address same direct to Miss Baker at "Le Beau Chene," Le Vesinet, (S & O); or to this writer at 11, bis Rue Mansart, Paris (9). And for this unique chance of a lifetime, I have only to say: "May the best man win!"

NO BASIS FOR MARRIAGE YARN: BOUILLON TO BAKER

Defender Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 12-28-46

PARIS—(ANP)—Jo Bouillon, famous French orchestra leader, made a special visit to Josephine Baker's chateau in Dordogne last week to deny responsibility to Miss Baker for the erroneous story appearing in a local French newspaper on Friday, Dec. 6, to the effect that he would marry her—a report which immediately creater international interest.

The close professional relationship that has bound the two celebrities together for many years has often subjected them to such accusation by whispering tongues, but the recent press report of a marriage between them was the first time the rumor ever got into print, it was disclosed.

Before leaving Paris for Dordogne, Monsieur Bouillon refuted the authenticity of the published story to a group of French journalists that besieged him.

Jo Baker Goes Into Seclusion for Rest

By EDGAR A. WIGGINS

PARIS (ANP)—With orders from her physician to retire and "take a complete rest" from her villa in Le Vesinet, Josephine Baker, famous singer and dancer, packed herself off to Southern France for an indefinite rest cure last week end. The Afro-American

This move was taken when physicians told her that "people will kill you with their kindness." They had reference to the more than 100 male and female admirers who were making a daily pilgrimage to bring flowers, fruits, and expressions of "joy" over her recent recovery. Baltimore, Md.

She left Paris for her magnificent Chateu des Mirandes, near Castelnau-Fayrac, Dordogne. Accompanied by her two Italian-in-laws, the aged and prominent Dr. Filippo Scoto and his wife, Christino; Edgar A. Williams, and Miss Baker's domestiques. Sat. 12-7-46

Dr. and Mrs. Scoto had arrived at Le Vesinet following a four-day trip from Rome, in answer to Miss Baker's request that they accompany her into seclusion. Mrs. Scoto is the sister of Count Pepito Abatino of Italy, first husband of Miss Baker.

Chateau des Mirandes is situated on a high hill in Southern France and is 3½ miles from the nearest village and 10 miles from the nearest city. Built in the 14th Centry, it is the last word in comfort and luxury.

Jo Baker Says Husband Hunt Will Continue

Defender Chicago, Ill.
Sat. 12-21-46

PARIS—(ANP)—Americans who lost hope last week at announcement that Josephine Baker, idol of the continent, had chosen her new husband can take heart again as Miss Baker denied current reports that she will marry Jo Bouillon, French bandleader.

The actress who had publicized the fact that she was seeking an American husband with whom she could devote time to the interests of the race, expressed amused surprise at newspaper accounts of her alleged coming marriage to Bouillon, now in Iitaly.

"I still intend to marry an American Negro," Miss Baker said.

Miss Baker reported that she is still not too well following her harrowing wartime experiences and that she cannot for four to six months accept any of the flattering offers of theatrical engagements made to her by Americans since she announced she would marry again.

Among these offers was one from Barney Josephson, owner of the Cafe Society Uptown and Cafe Society Downtown, who oered her $5,000 a week to appear in one of his New York nightclubs. Instead of accepting, however, Miss Baker is scheduled to undergo a fourth operation at Neuilly Dec. 28.

Josephine Baker To Wed Frenchman

The Call Kansas City, Mo.
Fri. 12-13-46

PARIS.—(NNPA)—Jo Bouillon, about 40, white leader of a French swing orchestra, said last Friday night that he and Josephine Baker, 39, of St. Louis, a Parisian music hall star, intended to marry and were planning a South American trip in April.

It will be her third marriage and Bouillon's first. Her first husband was the late Count Abatino and her second Jean Lion, French broker.

Bouillon said he and Miss Baker, who made her name in Paris as a torch singer at a reported salary of $3,000 a week at the Follies Bergere, met before the war When she came back to France after the liberation. They were members of the same entertainment troupe in tours of French army camps in Austria and Germany.

Miss Baker recently underwent an operation and i now in southern France. She ssued a statement to the press a few weeks ago to the effect that she wanted her next husband to be a Negro.

Orchestras, Entertainers (Count Basie)

Says Melody of 'Queer Street' Is Obscene

NEW YORK. —(Special)—The Miami, Fla. radio station WQAM has banned Count Basie's record "Queer Street" on the grounds that ,'even without lyrics the unrestrained use of barbaric rhythms and suggestive melody makes it unfit for their listeners to hear.

Thus Station WQAM has adopted the same policy toward Basie's music as the German Nazis who banned Basie's songs among the first to be banned as being unfit for the Aryan ear.

Can music along, without words, be obsene? Or is the obsenity in the minds of those who term it so, depending upon the mood of the listener, the time and place? These are some of the questions being asked by music lovers. Many musicians say it is incredible and absurd to believe that anyone can find a melody without lyrics shocking or obscene.

But whatever the beliefs people may hold regarding the Count's "Queer Street," this pianist-composer has been placed in select company by the banning.

Richard Straus's "Dance of the Seven Veils" music in the Metropolitan Opera company's 1907 production of "Salome" led to protests.

Shostakovich's music for "Lady Macbeth from Mtsensk" led to suggestions that it be censored.

Hungary prohibited "Gloomy Sunday," saying it led to a wave of suicides.

Before the "fiddle" changed to the "violin", Puritans condemned it as immoral and an "instrument of the devil."

COUNT BASIE

The Count believes that when a melody has no lyrics, the imagination of the listeners supplies the words. Perhaps station WQAM would be wise to inquire into the imaginations of its audience. Maybe the obscenity lies there rather than in the music of a tune.

Basie suggests that the record "Queer Street" be given a jury trial. The jurors should be selected from those whose minds are not in the need of washing with the strong cleanser of common sense.

Basie Drew $850 on N.Y. Debut, Now Paid $12,500

NEW YORK — Count Basie, who is this month celebrating his 10th anniversary as a bandleader, is being paid the near record high fee of $12,500 per week in his current engagement at the Roxy Theatre, which got underway last Friday.

Basie's fee at the Roxy is a far cry from the $850 weekly stipend he received at the old Famous Door on 52nd Street in the summer of 1938 in his New York debut. On July 24, Basie goes into the Aquarium Restaurant for a four-week run at a reported $5,000 per week.

Missed One Major Theatre

The Count's first taste of "big money" came when he played his first New York theatre date, at the Paramount on Broadway in the fall of 1939, for which he was paid $2250.

He has now played every Broadway theatre but the Capitol, and it appears doubtful that he will ever play that house since the Roxy holds an option on his services for the next five years. He played the Paramount in 1939; Loew's State in 1940; Strand in 1942 and the Roxy in 1944 and 1945.

In his current Roxy engagement, Basie is demonstrating his skill as an organ soloist for the first time with a special arrangement in which he shifts from his piano to the Hammond organ.

Bob Bailey, the Count's new singing find, who made his debut at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem last week, shares vocal honors with Jimmy Rushing and Ann Moore in the new Basie show.

Count Basie's $12,000 At Roxy Tops For Negro Bands On Broadway

NEW YORK — Count Basie, the "Jump King of Swing," who is this month celebrating his tenth anniversary as a bandleader, the near record high fee of $12,500 per week for his engagement at the de luxe Roxy theatre.

Basie's fee at the Roxy is a far cry indeed from the $850 weekly stipend he received at the old Famous Door on 52nd st. in the summer of 1938 in his New York debut and shows the tremendous strides he has made in recent years. The Count's first taste of "big money" came when he played his first New York theatre date, at the Paramount on Broadway in the fall of 1939, for which he was paid $2250.

The Count has now played every Broadway theatre but the Capitol, and it appears doubtful that he will ever play that house since the Roxy holds an option on his services for the next five years. After playing the Paramount in 1939, Basie played Loew's State in 1940, the Strand in 1942, and the Roxy in 1944 and 1945. The "Jump King" holds the distinction of being the only name band to play the Roxy since his last appearance there in May of last year, when he was in for a record-breaking five week run.

In his current Roxy engagement, Basie is demonstrating his skill as an organ soloist for the first time with a special arrangement in which he shifts from his piano to the Hammond organ.

Concert Field Lures Basie

Jump King To Play Organ As Feature

NEW YORK—Count Basie, the "Jump King of Swing," is presently making arrangements to present a series of jazz concerts this summer, one of the highlights of which will find the Count emerging as an organ soloist.

According to Milton Ebbins, his personal manager, the Count will limit his concert dates to appearances in five key cities, Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Hollywood. The entire Basie band will participate in the series.

Basie's concerts will be unique in that they will consist of three variations: blues, boogie-woogie and jump, the three distinct types of modern American music.

Basie Leaves Music Firm for Business of His Own

NEW YORK—Count Basie has severed his connection with Bregman, Vocco and Conn, Inc., after a relationship of more than seven years in favor of launching a music publishing firm of his own, it has been announced.

The new Basie firm, to be known as Sterling Music Corp. will be a subsidiary of Burke-Van Heusen, Inc., the deal having been set after negotiations of more than six months. Sterling Music will publish all original music by the Count, his musicians and his arranging staff.

Bregman-Vocco-Conn have, for the past seven years, enjoyed exclusive publishing rights to Basie works. His contract with the firm expired three years ago and was never renewed due to the Count's desire to set up his own publishing firm.

Among the first publications of Basie will be five of his original compositions, which he recorded earlier this month for Columbia. They are, "Mutton Leg," "Wild Bill's Boogie," "Hob Nail Boogie," "Stay on It," and "Get Goin' Blues."

Also assigned to the Basie catalogue will be several unpublished originals, including "The King," latest jump special penned in honor of Benny Goodman, which will be his next Columbia release, paired with his version of "Blue Skies."

Count Basie Defends Swing Music Against Critics Who See It Fading Out

LOS ANGELES—Count Basie, the silent exponent of swing music, deserted his sphinx-like role this week to defend the style of music for which he has become famous the world over.

Basie's stand came as a result of numerous predictions by critics that this style of music was merely a fad and would soon find its rightful place among other has-been fancies.

Among the things claimed for swing by Basie is that it is the natural sequel to New Orleans jazz, now almost obsolete, and played by few bands today, that was one of the standard-bearers of popular music.

Excluding his own success on the present tour of the West Coast Basie said: "I have checked and found that bands like Buddy Johnson, Bennie Goodman, Harry James, Artie Shaw, Erskine Hawkins and others are preferred by most followers of popular music. Then, too," he continued. "I have checked on those exponents of sweet music and rarely have I found any records broken or set up by their appearances. Yes, they all have their places in the make up of music presentations but certainly no monopoly on the field.

"Swing," he continued, "is here to stay and is as much a part of the American's way of life, musically, as any other form of entertainment."

Basie, long considered an ace of swing music, came into prominence several years ago when his band was discovered playing this unusual type of music in a small Kansas City night club. He was introduced to invade Broadway by John Hammond, then an official of the Columbia Broadcasting System and Recording Co.

Prior to his arrival Paul Whiteman had been swing's only dispenser but under Whiteman the musical style was referred to as "Symphonic Jazz." 'Twas when Benny Goodman followed Basie to become the "King of Swing" that the article received its present name. What followed is best told by the programs of hundreds of other great orchestras.

Orchestras, Entertainers (Cab Calloway)

Calloway asks $200,000 from prejudiced ofays

KANSAS CITY—Cab Calloway's suit against the owners and operators of the Pla-Mor ballroom for $200,000 has been filed in circuit court here, his attorneys, Maurice J. O'Sullivan and John G. Killiger Jr., both white, announced this week.

The suit names four partners owning the ballroom where Calloway and police officers fought last December after the band leader was insulted because of his race. Calloway was exonerated of the charges brought against him by the police and the ballroom's proprietors. Sat 2-23-46

The band leader's petition contains two counts of $100,000 damages. The first charges assault and battery with a deadly weapon; the second, false arrest and imprisonment.

In the petition, Calloway contends he was dazed and knocked down, his life endangered, and "cursed, insulted, offended, abused and humiliated."

Is Cab Calloway Slipping?

Billboard Indicates Big Letdown

The Defender Chicago, Ill Sat. 7-13-46

NEW YORK — Is Cab Calloway slipping or has he slipped from the perch that was once his? This is the theme of rumors going the rounds since his return to the Zanzibar here.

Cab Calloway

With most of the credit for what Club Zanzibar offers in appreciative amusement going to Pearl Bailey Billboard, a trade mag, had the following to say in a review by its "Herb":

"Zanzibar, which has arrived at the ripe old Broadway nightery age of 2½ years, sticks to the pattern of its success in the current talent layout. Unfortunately, while the policy of the all-chromo show is retained, the talent isn't. Aside from the work of Pearl Bailey and, to a lesser degree, the Peters Sisters, the show is a dull and colorless affair. It looks like something which—if it hadn't cost so much coin—might have been cooked up by entrepreneur Carl Erbe and producer Joe Howard as a hot-weather space filler.

"Biggest disappointment to old Cotton Clubites of a now-defunct era is Cab Calloway. He's a far cry from the guy who made "Hi-de-hi-de-ho" a national joy whoop. The native Negro zest and spontaneity are gone. In their place is a studied cuteness. No longer is Calloway merely a guy who had to let go with the 'hi-de-hi's' and the 'ho-de-ho's' because he was just so filled with joie-de-vivre it bubbled over. Now he's a self-conscious 'personality' merely peddling a trademark."

Ralph Cooper Will Appear With Joe Louis

Richmond, Va.

Ralph Cooper, emcee of the show coming to the Mosque on Saturday night, January 19, with the personal appearance of Champion Joe Louis, qualifies as one of the most versatile personalities in Negro show business. Ralph has done something of everything that comes under the broad head of "show business" and the amazing fact is that he does all of them well. 1-15-46

"Coop," as Ralph is known to his friends, has been a chorus boy, dancer, producer, band leader, motion picture star, night club impressario and radio announcer-director. Despite this wide range of activities, Ralph is still a comparatively youngster—he's just passed his thirty-fifth birthday. The answer is found in the fact that he has been in the show business since his knee pants days.

Introduced Louis

Cooper was a "natural" to tie the Joe Louis troupe into the neat package of entertainment. It was "Coop" who first publicly introduced Joe Louis in New York when he arrived in town from the West. Ralph introduced him in person on the stage of the Apollo Theater during the amateur hour broadcast which he had started a year before in 1934 (and which is still running successfully). Cooper discovered Songstress Betti Mays, who will be heard in the show here, in the chorus line at the Elks Rendezvous where he was producing, and tapped her for stardom. "Coop" was one of the strongest boosters of Luis Russell's band, which will furnish the instrumental music Saturday night at the Mosque.

The show is being brought to Richmond under the auspices of James Mathews, and is sponsored by Samis Grotto. 1-15-46

Tickets are on sale at the Virginia Record Shop and Slaughter's Hotel.

GAINES HITS JACKPOT

Hollywood (PPS).—One of the most promising lyric writers to hit the big time in recent months is Lee Gaines, bass with the Delta Rhythm Boys, whose "Just a-Sittin' and a-Rockin'," has zoomed higher into the hit parade class.

Delta Rhythm Boys: Good Will Envoys

By John Hudson Jones

The Delta Rhythm Boys refuse to be "Uncle Toms," even if it means the cancellation of a seven year contract. And contrary to the opinion of many Negro entertainers and producers such a stand pays off in cold cash box office results.

The Delta Rhythm Boys, who refuse to be "Uncle Toms."

Acting as spokesman, Rene De Knight, pianist for the group which just completed a smashing engagement at the Blue Angel, an East 56th Street night spot told some of their experiences.

Several years ago they had such a contract with one of the big studios. The studio had the right to renew or drop its option each year. Finally they were asked to perform as porters in a scene. They immediately protested to the studio head. He couldn't see why they objected, "Most everybody in your race does that sort of work." They held out and the scene was changed.

Later they were asked to be porters, and waiters, in a train dining car scene. Protesting, the were told, "You know, that in certain sections of the country the only way you'd ever get in such a situation would be as porters and waiters."

They still refused and informed him, "We can't destroy our previous good appearance record by taking such degrading roles." At the completion of two years the contract was not renewed.

"We felt we were justified in our stand because of our increasing popularity with thousands of servicemen both Negro and white, who have appreciated our decent and dignified type of entertainment."

De Knight discussed the home market. "Box office is the most important thing in show business, and most producers hide behind the southern box office argument when it cames to Negroes. Well we understand this position but we still feel that people can be educated to dignified and normal Negroes the same as they can be educated to the crap shooting and lazy types."

The Negro people can and should play an important part in the fight against the established practices of the movie and radio producers. "Since box office counts most," De Knight said, "Our people and those whites who enjoy seeing Negroes in decent roles should take every opportunity to let the producers know this sentiment. I frankly think most Americans appreciate intelligent entertainment. If the public reacts badly to these Uncle Tom types, you can rest assured they'll listen. Money talks the only language they understand."

Besides DeKnight the others are Carl Jones, first Tenor; Travis Crawford second tenor; Kelsey Pharr, baritone; and Lee Gaines, bass. Their constant practice of demanding straight roles and material has gained such respect for them until today the content and selection of material is left entirely to their discretion.

"We feel that we can be good will ambassadors. Our part is a small one but with the help of many others we are sure things will change for the better."

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers (Dorothy Donegan)

No More Muggin' for Dot

Alluring is Dorothy Donegan, boogie-woogie pianist, in this pose, who has announced that she will quit her hot piano cold for the concert stage, because she's dissatisfied with the picture of herself as a mugging entertainer.
—(TYPhoto).

CRITICAL and AMUSEMENTS

The Duke Casually Dreams Up, 65 Songs for 'Twilight Alley'

PM New York, N.Y. Sun. 11-24-46

By JOHN S. WILSON

Duke Ellington is not a man who could ever be accused of not being busy. For over 20 years he has been leading, playing with, composing and arranging for a band which has maintained a unique position in jazz, a band which has always had a repertoire consisting mostly of Ellington originals. Right now he is just a little busier than usual. This weekend he is giving his fifth annual concert at Carnegie Hall featuring ten new Ellington compositions and he has only recently finished the score for *Twilight Alley* which opened in New Haven Thursday and reaches Broadway Dec. 26.

Twilight Alley is John La Touche's modernization of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. The main characters and motivations have been retained, but otherwise the show is topical. A few days ago Ellington and La Touche were lounging around the Duke's office in the Brill Building discussing *Twilight Alley* with representatives of the nation's music magazines.

This will be, La Touche pointed out, the 51st adaptation of *The Beggar's Opera* since it was originally presented in London in 1728. Gay wrote 69 songs for the show. Ellington has produced 65, following some of the patterns Gay used. Most of them are very short.

"Every song is not a great lush production," La Touche explained.

"So if I don't hear ecstatic applause after each number," the Duke put in, "I'll be content with an ecstatic sigh."

The cast, headed by Libby Holman, Alfred Drake, Zero Mostel and Avon Long, is mixed but no consideration was taken of color in assigning roles.

"We were only concerned with talent and whether the individual fitted the role," La Touche said. "There are no race relations in the play and no attempt has been made to whiten or darken people. This means a great deal to me."

La Touche has been working on the book and lyrics for more than a year, but Ellington came on the scene only last March. He has been on the road with his band most of the time since then and wrote wherever he could.

"A lot of it was written in bed," the Duke said. "Someday I'd like to find a place where I could just reach up from my pillow, find some paper and start writing. I could do a lot more. On *Twilight Alley*, if I were writing a long sequence, I'd be leaning on one elbow and my arm would go to sleep. By the time I'd get my arm awake, then I'd be awake and I'd never get back to sleep." Sun. 11-24-46

Ellington has used folk and early jazz themes as the basis for a great deal of the score, paralleling Gay's use of folk songs in the original.

"At one point I've tried to capture the pulse of the low dives of the early 20s," Ellington said. "They had a certain pulse that never changed. I remember back in 1923 hearing Willie the Lion Smith at the old Capital Pleasure Club. He was a great influence on all the great piano players—not that I'm a great piano player—and he had a beat that stays in my mind. I've tried to capture that atmosphere. It has nothing to do with melody or harmony. It's just a matter of absorbing the pulse of a period."

The Duke sat down at a piano to illustrate his point by playing some of the score. After a few measures he got lost and La Touche put him back on the track by humming the tune. Ellington hummed as he played, grunting every now and then as he bore down on a chord. Then La Touche sang one of the numbers. At this point we left. La Touche has a very interesting voice—it sounds rather like a phonograph record being played with a comb which has a few teeth missing—but we left anyhow.

Duke Ellington Stumbles a Bit At Carnegie

PM New York Nov. 11-25-46

There is something about a Carnegie Hall appearance which can defeat the best of popular bands. Sometimes it is the formality of the occasion or the inability of the musicians to reach a rapprochement with their audience in the vast hall. Duke Ellington, whose orchestra gave its fifth annual concert there on Saturday and Sunday evenings, bypassed these two obstacles but stumbled and sprawled over the notion that the occasion called for Something Special. Something Special turned out to be eight new Ellington compositions, including a so-called suite, and two by Billy Strayhorn, Ellington's arranger. It is a little too much to expect that they would all be worthy of being programmed at a concert. They weren't.

Django Reinhardt, guitarist famed for his work with the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, makes his American debut with Duke Ellington at Carnegie Hall this week end.

In introducing the first of the new numbers, Ellington said that the purpose of his concert was to display his instrumentalists to best advantage. "They are the reason for all the writing," said the Duke. Certainly little fault can be found with the musicians in the Ellington band, individually or collectively. Despite numerous personnel changes in recent years, the Duke's group has remained one of the most brilliant and polished orchestras in existence. But most of the material they were working with this weekend scarcely showed them "to best advantage." It hardly seemed possible that this was the same band which was playing with such force and rhythmic drive at the Aquarium Restaurant a few weeks ago, causing *Downbeat* to remark that it sounded as though the old Jungle Band had come back.

The most ambitious of the new pieces is the *Deep South Suite*. In this Ellington says he and Strayhorn are trying to describe what has been heard about the South and what they have seen in the South. Of its four parts, only the concluding one, *Happy Go Lucky Local*, is completely realized. This is a joyous rhythmic piece which rides along over a solid beat provided by Ellington's piano. The train theme is one of the most popular in jazz and Ellington and Strayhorn have made an interesting addition to it.

In *Minnehaha*, Ellington once again uses Kay Davis' opera-trained voice for a "vocal without words." This is less successful than a similar piece, *Transblucency*, which Ellington introduced last year. This fact was emphasized by the use of *Transblucency* as an encore to *Minnehaha*. The difference between the two numbers (and, in this case, the difference between an interesting and a mediocre number) is that in *Transblucency* Miss Davis' voice is used as the third instrument of a trio with valve trombone and clarinet, whereas in *Minnehaha* she carries the melody throughout with the band in back of her.

Of the rest of the new pieces, the only one worth noting is Strayhorn's *Flippant Flurry*, a light, bouncy little thing featuring Jimmy Hamilton's agile clarinet. Personally I would be much happier if Ellington would rely more on his vast library for such concerts, perhaps limiting new works to half of the program. PM 11-25-46 Mon.

Guest soloist for the concert was Django Reinhardt, the French gypsy guitarist, making his first American appearance. Despite two paralyzed fingers on his left hand, Reinhardt has an amazing dexterity and is a complete master of his instrument. Although he is best known in this country for the jazz virtuosity and rhythmic sense exhibited in his records with the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, he showed himself a more eclectic player at Carnegie, mixing jazz and flamenco techniques, especially in an unaccompanied number titled *Improvisation No. 1*. Playing such standards as *Honeysuckle Rose* and *Body and Soul* with the Ellington rhythm section and at times the band as a whole behind him, Reinhardt worked out some pleasant and occasionally unusual variations but never generated the excitement which was evident in some of his work with the French quintet. —JOHN S. WILSON.

Django Music

Django Reinhardt was sure everyone must have heard of him. Hadn't jazz critics like France's Hugues Panassié called him Europe's leading jazz artist and the world's greatest jazz guitarist? Django was so certain that he was famous in the U.S. that he left his guitar in France: U.S. guitar manufacturers would give him guitars and pay him for playing them. Last week, before he could go on stage in Cleveland's Public Music Hall, he had to go out and borrow a guitar.

The concert manager, for one, had never heard of Django Reinhardt, so Django's name didn't even appear on the program (a Duke Ellington jazz concert)

Leonard Halpern

REINHARDT & THE DUKE
"Yah, yah, yah."

But when the Duke introduced "the legendary Django" from the stage, there were surprised murmurs and loud applause from the audience—and even greater applause when Django finished with *Tiger Rag* and *Honeysuckle Rose*.

Swarthy Django Reinhardt, now 36, is an almost illiterate gypsy who was born *manvais*, but Louis—*il est formidable!*" jazz classics in a *roulotte* (trailer) and only recently After listening to records by Armstrong, *My Melancholy Baby*, has succumbed to houses. As a boy he played gypsy music on the guitar and violin. When he was 19, he heard a record of Louis Armstrong's *Dallas Blues*. Said of the Hot Club of France (three guitars, and bass). Their records La Roulotte, Django's cabaret in Paris' of U.S. Rue Pigalle. Last month the Duke paid Django developed a one-finger picking style because his left hand was badly burned in a fire and became useless for chords.

Chicago, Ill.
Newspaper, N.Y.
Mar. 11-25-46

They rehearsed only 20 minutes before their Cleveland performance. They talked in sign language and monosyllables, since Django understands hardly any English. "*Tiger Rag*—number *un*," the Duke said, holding up one finger. "First you play around . . . just a few riffs" (the Duke made guitar-strumming motions). "Then we give you a chord—wham, you go into *Tiger* by yourself and we start giving you the beat" (The Duke demonstrated on the piano.) "Understand?" Django grinned enthusiastically. They jammed for five minutes, until one by one the band boys left their cards, gossip and naps to gather around, shout encouragement: "Go to it, master. Yah, yah, yah."

Says Duke: "Django is all artist. Jazz isn't exactly the word for it. Jazz was that raggedy music they used to play about 1920. Nowadays, jazz must be classified according to who's playing it. I call Reinhardt's playing Django music. He's one of those musicians who is unable to play a note that's not pretty or not in good taste. Sure he's a great virtuoso."

Music in Review

Daily Worker New York, N.Y.

By Murray Chase

Duke Ellington's fifth annual appearance at Carnegie Hall last weekend was especially designated the "Duke Ellington Festival." The music and other doings on stage were everything the word festive suggests. Colored spotlights, shining brass and bright plastic stands contrasted dramatically with Carnegie's grey stage wall.

Juke 12-3-46

There was drama in the music, too. Solid brass attacks suddenly dropped away to allow an imaginative solo improvisation to come through; vocal choruses were subtly supported by rich reeds and pointed up by brass commentary; trumpets reached for high notes which weren't there—and found them! And underlying all these spectacular happenings the steadiness and the bounce of the superb rhythm section to remind one that for the other 363 days of the year this same music fulfils its usual function — accompanying dancers. Wherever the Duke plays, there are groups of people who will gather around the stand and listen rather than dance. That these listeners have grown in number sufficient to fill Carnegie Hall for this two-night stand indicates that there is content in this music which makes it listenable.

Ellington has explored the usual moods of popular music, blues, comedy, simple melody, impressionism, "whispering jump," etc., etc., etc., and is making efforts to expand these expressions. In his **Deep South Suite**, he attempts to express a contrast between the "Chamber of Commerce dream picture of Dixie" with "some of the other things . . . not in accordance with the Chamber of Commerce picture . . . at times directly opposite." His suite succeeds partially in suggesting a mood of blues and moments of strident discord, but to our taste, a simple improvised blues expresses much more. 12-3-46

made double-dealing a commonplace, honor among thieves a joke, and the misdeeds of the underworld a symbol of the misdeeds of high life as well. In fact, the highwayman-hero Macheath was meant to be nobody less than Robert Walpole, the Prime Minister of England.

Well, all this might be disposed of as ancient history, except that *Beggar's Holiday*, without putting it to real use, has not quite disposed of it itself. Thursday night the ghost hovered over something that refused to seem very satirical, *could* not seem romantic, and was half-hearted in its melodrama. Nor, raffish as they might seem by musical-comedy standards, did the mobsters, molls and madams of *Beggar's Holiday* catch the pungency, the coldblooded, boisterous gaiety of *The Beggar's Opera*. They seemed afraid to take themselves seriously (which flattened out the melodrama), yet were not projected from any consistently comic point of view. Scoundrelly Peachum, for example, became a mere zany whom Zero Mostel absolutely mauled with his intemperate practices. But much of the trouble lay with Mr. La Touche's book (his lyrics were better). Mr. La Touche showed too much taste for sex, and very little taste beyond that.

But beyond its addled tone, *Beggar's Holiday*—simply regarded as a musical—is very unven entertainment. It takes an unconscionable time to get going, and then it cannot keep going; a lot of it just falls by the wayside. Actually, the show is at its best when farthest from its source, when it is a matter of pure 20th-century jazz and jive. Most of Duke Ellington's score is nervous, rhythmic and individual, and a pleasant relief from stock musical-comedy "tunes." It also fits the dancing, and when *Beggar's Holiday* really comes to life, as it does for the last 20 minutes of Act 1, it is immensely spirited and enjoyable. There are some good shorter stretches, too, and some nice people involved in them. Alfred Drake, who can do other things than sing well, is enormously helpful. I particularly liked Mildred Smith, and the dancing of Marie Bryant and Avon Long; and Oliver Smith's sets are excellent. *Beggar's Holiday* is independent-minded enough to deserve a better fate; but avoiding cliche is only half the battle. 12-29-46

—Louis Kronenberger

predecessors in several respects. The program included a larger proportion of new material than has been heard in any of the previous concerts, including Ellington's new four-part suite titled "The Deep South," and a medley drawn from three W. C. Handy jazz immortals, "Memphis Blues," "St. Louis Blues" and "Beale Street Blues."

This year, Ellington also featured an artist who is not a member of his band, the internationally famed guitarist, Django Rheinhardt. Rheinhardt, the French gypsy who founded and still directs the Hot Club of Paris, who is making his first appearance in this country, is nevertheless known to many Americans who treasure his recordings as collector's items.

As in past years, some of the new compositions which Ellington wrote for this occasion were notable for their uncommonly expressive title, such as "A Very Unbooted Character," "The Eighth Veil" and "The Beautiful Indians," the latter featuring a vocal without words by Miss Kay Davis. Other instrumental and vocal soloists who were featured at the Carnegie concert included Al Hibbler, Harold Baker, Russell Procope, Harry Carney, Johnny Hodge, Lawrence Brown, Ray Nance and Sonny Greer. In all, twenty-one numbers were executed, including works by Billy Strayhorn and Mercer Ellington, son of the great composer-leader-pianist. Sat. 11-30-46

Ayon Long Gets Role in Duke's 'Beggar's Opera'

The Afro-American Baltimore

Sat. 10-19-46

NEW YORK — Several of the leading characters in the modern version of "The Beggar's Opera" have already been chosen, Duke Ellington revealed to the AFRO in an exclusive interview last Friday. They are Libby Holman, Avon Long, Sporting Life of "Porgy and Bess;" Marjorie Belle and Marie Bryant. Other members in the cast of 28 will be selected during the rehearsals this week.

"The story is laid in the 18th century," explained Duke. "It's an English play by John Gay. The characters in it are crooked politicians, thieves, prostitutes and con men.

Play in Modern Setting

The leading character is a rogue named McHeath, who intrigues women into playing the oldest game and profession in the world. He is a charming thief who is of great value to the police and crooked politicians, who buy stolen goods from him. Later, they lock him up and proceed to take his vast wealth away from him.

"McHeath becomes involved with the Mayor's daughter and also the police chief's daughter."

The play is done in a modern setting and takes place in a large metropolitan city of the U.S.

Singing, Dancing, Acting

"We hope the story will not be too shocking," continued Duke. "We have great faith in the American musical ear and know that America is becoming more musically inclined as time goes on. It is all music from beginning to end, having about 75 to 80 songs. It consists mainly of singing, dancing and acting."

The principal characters will retain the original names in the story. Some of the others may be changed.

Duke also revealed that Alfred Drake, white, star of the musical comedy, "Oklahoma," may be cast for the leading role of McHeath

A Classic Is Done Over And Partially Done In

PM New York, N. Y.

Sun. 12-29-46

PM Reviews

BEGGAR'S HOLIDAY, an adaptation of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* with book and lyrics by John Latouche and music by Duke Ellington, presented by Perry Watkins and John R. Sheppard, Jr., at the Broadway, with Alfred Drake, Zero Mostel, Bernice Parks, Avon Long, Mildred Smith, Jet MacDonald, Marie Bryant, Jack Bittner, Perry Bruskin and many others; staged by Nicholas Ray; costumes by Walter Florell; scenery by Oliver Smith; lighting by Peggy Clark; choreography by Valerie Bettis.

Beggar's Holiday, as the program says, is based on *The Beggar's Opera*. But it is so far from being a mere jazzed-up "revival" that it can best be described as a very laudable attempt to do something really different in the musical field. Exactly what, however, you never find out—for the crushing reason that its fashioners seem not to have known themselves. The praiseworthy thing about their show is that it travels its own road; the highly unsatisfactory thing is that it never fetches up at any destination. Despite energetic and excellent things en route, *Beggar's Holiday* leaves you, and itself, stranded.

Its failure to get anywhere may be bound up, more than at first appears, with where it starts out from. Jumping two centuries to the underworld of today, offering a new book, new lyrics and new music, *Beggar's Holiday* in one sense retains almost nothing of *The Beggar's Opera*—only the names and outlines of its principal characters, a similar enough story line, and (as a kind of memento) the words of one song. This is very little, but for all that it may have been too much, since it has often made for revamping rather than direct creation; for double-exposures rather than clear focus; and for somewhat muddled aims. *Beggar's Holiday* seems, so to speak, to have kept *The Beggar's Opera* in its head without letting any of it get into its veins. Now *The Beggar's Opera* is as 18th century as Hogarth; and its hard, high-spirited satire is directed at that passion for worldly gain which

Ellington's First Opera Wins Praise

Defender Chicago, Ill.

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—The long and eagerly-awaited Duke Ellington musical comedy, "Twilight Alley," with book and lyrics by John LaTouche had its debut tryout performance at Shubert Theatre here last night. Sat. 11-30-46

All indications are that Duke has a potential hit of tremendous proportions in "Twilight Alley" if it gets some judicious trimming and tightening up may well be that rare avis in the theatre an artistic and box office success the like of which Broadway has not seen in a generation.

The musical at its tryout ran over three hours and had 39 musical numbers. It may well be said the piece lacks in dancing department and the comedy division needs a few belly laughs to bol-

ster the evening's fun.

Ellington and LaTouche combined to write a score that will probably find itself listed in the repertoire of this country's musical treasures. Ellington did his score in a restrained but modern mood that well displays his musicianship and his artistry. LaTouche's lyrics are intelligent and literate something rarely found in the usual musical comedy.

Given headline billing in the show are Alfored Drake and Libby Holman.

Their work is acceptable but not outstanding. However, stealing the honors are Avon Long who, playing the role of "Careless Love," scores terrifically in a song number, "I Want To Be Had." Also impressing with her artistry is Mildred Smith, who as "Lucy Lockit,"

Most of the action takes place in Houseman, a bordello of which Libby Holman action, make as "Miss Jenny" is the mistress able performand in a jailhouse where Rollin e production Smith plays the part of "Chief their talent. Locket." Zero Mostel, the rotund ogram note, night club comedian, essaying his "A parallel first role in a legitimate produc- Beggars tion is tops. 946 version.

Duke Gives 5th Carnegie Concert

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa.

NEW YORK CITY—Duke Ellington's fifth annual concert at Carnegie Hall, last Saturday and Sunday evenings, differed from its

Ellington Again Tops Esquire's Jazz Awards

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 1-3-46

NEW YORK—(SNS)— The inimitable Duke Ellington has been chosen for the second consecutive year as the top arranger and his band as the top jazz band in Esquire's 1946 All-American Jazz Selections.

And the jazz stylists Benny Goodman, Louis Armstrong, Red Norvo and Coleman Hawkins have been picked for the third consecutive year as the top specialists in the jazz world three-times winner of one of jazz's most coveted awards, the 1946 Gold Esky' Statuette signifying All-American rating.

"World's Greatest," Declare Swingsters

Oklahoma City

JOHNNY HODGES

Black Dispatch

For the sixth consecutive time, Johnny Hodges, reed man with Duke Ellington since 1928, received the Esquire Magazine Gold Eskie award for the annual poll selection as the World's Greatest Saxaphonist. Along with Hodges top-rating was Duke Ellington whose band also received the highest award for swing orchestras.

The above candid shot was taken last October near St. Nicholas avenue and 116th street as the great swing idol awaited his chauffeur.—(Photo by May Whitby).

Ellington Slices $19,800 Melon

Balt. Md. Afro-American

CHICAGO — Duke Ellington, who first introduced his jazz concert at Carnegie Hall, NYC, drew a record $19,800 for a matinee and evening jazz concert here Jan. 21, at the Opera House. 3,000 were turned away. 2-2-46

Ellington, a recent "Esky" award winner, received $10,000 as his slice of the melon.

It's 'Holiday' And Not 'Opera In Duke's Book

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 11-2-46

NEW YORK—"Beggar's Holiday" is the title selected for the new musical in the modern American idiom, with music by Duke Ellington and book and lyrics by John Latouche, which started rehearsals Monday, under the direction of John Houseman.

Based on the 18th century classic, "The Beggar's Opera," by John Gay, "Beggar's Holiday" employs a cast of 35 and features Alfred Drake, Libby Holman and Avon Long.

"Beggar's Holiday" Gets Another Title

The Afro American Baltimore, Md.

"Twilight Alley" is the new title for the Duke Ellington-John Latouche modern version of "The Beggar's Opera," formerly titled "Beggar's Holiday."

Dorothy Johnson, Rollin Smith, and Gordon Nelson will play important parts in the musical. Alfred Drake and Libby Holman play the leading roles and Zero Mostel and Ayon Long are featured. Sat. 11-16-46

"Twilight Alley" opens in New Haven, Thursday, Nov. 21, for four performances, and from there will play the New Opera House, Newark, N.J., for eight performances, beginning Tuesday, Nov. 26.

Only Critics Could Observe Duke's Old Musicians Were Absent

Chicago Defender Chicago, Ill.

The Duke Ellington genius exerted itself twice here last Sunday when he appeared at the Civic Opera House for his annual concert in swing. Sat 2-2-46

First, it is doubtful that any other leader could have appeared in two concerts, afternoon and evening, and packed the huge house on both occasions; secondly, few leaders would have dared to attempt a repeat concert (he was here a few months ago) with such stars as Rex Stewart and Ray Nance missing from the band's personnel. This is what Duke Ellington did and the result is worthy of comment.

To the average patron both experiments proved successful. However, to those who know the Duke's accomplishments, style and expressions there was a feeling of discomfort, especially when the band attempted such numbers as "Black, Brown and Beige;" "Perfume Suite" and the Ellington naturals of the past decade.

Musicians like "Cats" Anderson and Jimmy Hamilton are artists but the odd Ellington's arrangements proved rather difficult for them to interpret smoothly in such a short time. In time they will fit into the picture as smoothly as Rex Stewart, Ray Nance, Ben Webster and the late Jimmy Blanton. Until the experience in Duke's system arrives, however, followers of Ellington will share the same uncertainty of their ability to interpret, that the leader himself shows, when playing his most cherished and beloved numbers.

The day was a grand slam for the Ellington troupe. The occasion was the annual presentation of awards by a trade magazine for meritorious work by musicians and bands. Several of these awards went to Ellington and his men. Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney received trophies for having been voted best of the 1945 sax stars; "Cats" Anderson and Hamilton also received awards and Ellington himself was rewarded for his superior arrangements and the popularity of his band as a whole; and there was one for Lawrence Brown. Sat 2-2-46

Brown, Carney and Hodges are Ellington standard bearers who have long since become a part of his style. And they showed it by blowing power into an aggregation that might otherwise have suffered from the loss of some of the band's key artists of the past. Especially was this noticeable in Brown's solo performance in "Circe." In passages where the band usually moves in Brown kept going which naturally maintained its original perfection.

But here again this Ellington genius exerts itself. Not only is the musician a master arranger and artist but one of the best, as they say in the trade, "Pick-Up Men" in the business. You don't fall before the Ellington baton or piano. Both are there for the protection of everything Ellington does. But best of all the leader has in those men he's molded into his style artists who can aid his attempt at mastery.—A. M.

Young Ellington Debuts at Savoy

Pittsburgh Courier N.Y. Sat 4-13-46

Mercer Ellington and his new orchestra of fifteen men make their initial New York bow to the public at the Savoy Ballroom, Saturday, April 13, for an indefinite engagement. Young Ellington tried his band out in his own home town Washington, D. C., a couple of Sundays ago and from all reports, it won't be long before there will be a race between him and his dad Duke.

Mercer will be playing many of his own tunes which his vocalist, Carmen Clark, will sing. At the Apollo last week, where his famous dad was holding forth, Mercer was seen rushing down the backstage stairs with his father, who was late. Asked why he was rushing, he quipped, "I'm just practicing how to make a late show." Sat 4-13-46

That brand of humor is an Ellington trademark and with it, Mercer is destined to go far in the band business.

COMPOSER, ARRANGER AND PIANIST DUKE ELLINGTON
real genius is getting men to translate moods

First Concert, Thanks to DAR

Washington to Get Real Treat With Ellington at Watergate

Washington Ga.

NOTHING could be more appropriate than Duke Ellington's orchestra as the first "popular" attraction to play a concert at the Watergate. After all, Ellington is not only the greatest genius in hot music, he's a home town boy as well.

This Thursday's bash also is a deliciously timed jab at the self-righteous Daughters of the American Revolution who, in convention last week, justified retention of their "white artists only" clause for Constitution Hall on the grounds that it is consistent with practices found elsewhere in the Capital. Like the Watergate, for example?

Although Duke Ellington was named by Percy Grainger and other classicists as the greatest figure in all American music, not just jazz, he has never, until this week, been able to play a concert

GOTTLIEB

in the city where most of his relatives and old friends still live.

The concert, sponsored by a charitable group seeking to raise funds for a canteen for underprivileged children, will give Washingtonians a chance to hear the music of the man whose bands have been the most important thing in hot music since about 1928, a few short years after Ellington left this city for New York.

The Duke's historical position at the pinnacle of American bands is all but unquestioned. A poll of top musicians, critics and musicologists would find all but a handful of faddists agreeing that Duke Ellington and his orchestra are the greatest thing to evolve from the broad field of popular music.

Not Himself Alone

In the last sentence, I deliberately lumped together the Duke and his orchestra. That's because Duke's talents cannot be expressed in terms of himself, alone, as in the case of an important instrumentalist or composer. It so happens that Ellington is a considerable pianist and, as shown in polls taken by the music journals, is swing music's top composer and arranger. But his real greatness lies in his ability to get a group of musicians to translate his rich, personal emotions into music whch sensitive listeners recognize as the outpourings of a gifted fellow man. Other orchestras can and do play Ellington compositions and arrangements. What comes out of these other orchestras is, emotionally, just another piece of swing music with merely a little more substance than most.

Credit for the orchestra's abilities belong, principally, to Ellington himself. Through his will, he has been able to make the men under him respond like a living part of himself . . . like an extra set of vocal chords skillfully grafted in his throat.

Credit must also go, too, to the men themselves. No band in history has contained at any one time the giants found in an Ellington unit. In his peak period in the very early 40's, Duke had Hodges, Williams, Carney, Brown, Bigard, Blanton, Webster, Nanton. In poll after poll, each of these men placed first, second or third best at his respective instrument.

Absorb Moods

What's more, Ellington personnel, until recently, almost never changed. Musicians remained year after year and thoroughly absorbed the Ellington mood. Or should I say moods—for the Duke is a man of great variety. He can be exotic on "Caravan," harsh on "Congo Brava," ... pleasant on "Gal From Joe's," pretty on "Solitude," wildly brilliant on "Flaming Sword" and solid on "Jack the Bear."

Some time ago Ellington's publicity men circulated slogans that Ellington was "20 years ahead of the times." That was the least exaggerated remark ever made by a press agent. The current emphasis in swing on rich scoring, lush coloring, unconventional harmony, European modernisms were Ellington trademarks during the 1930's.

Unfortunately, the Duke's orchestra has slipped in the past three or four years. I've caught him too many times in too many places sounding like just another good orchestra—instead of like a great orchestra.

Whether or not he's still tops is problematical and unimportant. The big thing is his deterioration by his own standards. Whether it's a temporary slump or a simple matter of aging remains to be seen.

More Than 9,000 Attend Ellington Concert

By Conrad Clark

WASHINGTON. (ANP) — More than 7,000 paid concert fans, plus more than 2,000 non-paid fans, heard Duke Ellington at a jazz concert played at the Watergate here last week, less than 300 yards in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

The program was sponsored by the Baker's Dozen, Inc., a group of 20 young women, and proceeds of the affair will help provide a social-recreational program for Washington teen-agers to curb juvenile delinquency.

The program was a duplication of that recently given in Carnegie Hall.

The rails at the Arlington bridge were crowded with the non-paying fans, as well as the river which was dotted with canoes and boats, lazily drifting by.

A native of the capital, Duke is yet the favorite of the fans here, regardless of color, as he is through out the nation.

Ellington, Mills Boys And Ray Nance Rock Broadway's Paramount

By ROB ROY

NEW YORK—Jitterbug paradise for the next few weeks is the Paramount theatre here, the largest presentation house on Broadway and not without reason.

You see on May 8, the management brought Duke Ellington's great ork and those terrific Mills Brothers to co-star one of the greatest stage bills the house has seen in months. And to make the engagement even more terrific the Duke re-employed Ray Nance, his trumpet and his violin and that is why the Paramount is today a Jitterbug Paradise.

On the same bill are those Clark brothers, one of the cleanest and niftiest acts in stage circles. The Clarks are smooth like the Nicholas brothers and add a bit of terrificness that reminds you no little of the Berry boys. They come close to having everything one can hope for on a theatre stage.

Arrival of Duke Ellington's ork on the Paramount stage was a welcome sight to the theatre's patronage. This is the first time Duke has played the theatre in two seasons and it may be his first Paramount engagement in the house's history. We are not so certain about the latter. But which ever is true the fact remains he is very much present now and doing the job everyone knew he would do if given the chance.

There have always been occasions for winks by Ellington fans over the great leader's lack of big theatre dates on Broadway. In some quarters it was whispered that his absence from such theatres was due to the fact that he refused to allow outside management to cut in too heavily on profits from his ork. The Duke owns his band, you know. He pays the regular booking fee but after that there are no cut ins.

Here Duke's case is unique. There is no question but that public demands coming as a result of his many record breaking success in the concert field tipped the scale his way in the mater of big time bookings. You cannot keep a fellow down when the public proves on every hand that it wants him. And here is the story of the Ellington co-starrer with the Mills Brothers at the Paramount.

Theatre Debut

On Own Hook. Mercer Ellington, son of the famous Duke, is out to carve a niche for himself in the world of music without treading on the popularity of his dad. He brings his new band into the Apollo theatre Friday with The Deep Boys and Jackie Mabley in support. Discharged from the Army in the past year, young Ellington has been working diligently getting his band together. Unlike most band leaders, Mercer appointed a Harlem boy as his business and road manager. Like his father, Mercer is a song writer as well as musician. "Moon Mist" is but one of his many compositions. Don't bother to play stage-door Marys girls, Mercer has a lovely wife and two fourth-generation Ellingtons.

Ellington won't tour the south just now, thanks

Duke Ellington, who finished a stint at the Lincoln theatre Monday, backed himself and his band out of a five-week tour of the South this week, giving as reason the recent worsening of racial unrest in that region.

The tour, made up of concerts and one-nighters through Texas and other southern states, was to have filled up the free time between Ellington's west coast stay and his coming New York dates.

William Morris agency, bookers for the Ellington orchestra, optimistically announced that the tour would be made at a later date.

Ellington Jams Carnegie Hall

NEW YORK—A capacity house at Carnegie Hall, Saturday night, heard Duke Ellington in his fifth annual concert, which was repeated on Sunday night.

Sticking to his printed program, Ellington opened with the introduction of a new suite, "The Deep South," and the audience went wild when he swung into "Things Ain't What They Used to Be."

Most of the selections were by Ellington or his writing and arranging companion, Bill Strayhorn. Among band members featured were Ray Nance, Harry Carney, Jimmie Hamilton and Johnny Hodges.

The Duke honored W. C. Handy by playing a medley of his blues and introduced to the American public, as guests soloist, Django Reinhardt, of France.

The program closed with Duke playing a medley of his song hits at the piano.

Book Reviews

by J. Saunders Redding

"Duke Ellington," by Barry Ulanov, Published by Creative Age Press, Inc., Price $3.)

Barry Ulanov's Duke Ellington is less a biography of the famous band leader-composer than a history of jazz. With its liberal use of jazz and swing terminology (which sometimes stumped me) and its complete Duke Ellington "discography" (which word is new and means list of records or "discs"), the book is an item for the lover of the cacophony of modern jazz music, which I confess I am not.

And if all that Barry Ulanov says is true, then my lack of appreciation for jazz and/or swing is probably a serious flaw in my education.

I have sat through innumerable concerts of the stuff by the best, including Duke Ellington, and still don't like it.

Book Didn't Help

And Ulanov's book did not help me any, though I suppose it's a good book. It says what the author intended it to say and it says it well. But, as the assorted elfish and totally nugatory characters in the book constantly remark, "it's not for me."

Especially not for me is the pretentious seriousness with which jazz and/or swing is treated.

Of course jazz and/or swing is an idiom, and possibly an authentic one, but it seems to me to bear about the same relation to music as stage-Jewish dialect bears to Hebrew or pidgin English to the language of Chaucer.

You just can't say anything important or impressive in it—and if Duke Ellington had fifty men in his brass section and as many in his reeds and percussion playing their hearts out on "The New East St. Louis Toodle-oo," it still wouldn't have the aesthetic value of Sibelius's "Finlandia" played on an out-of-tune piano by my Aunt Sophie, who specializes in "Chopsticks," but would try anything that makes musical sense.

Definitely, jazz and/or swing is not for me.

American Phenomenon

But all that part of the book which deals with Edward Kennedy Ellington (intimately called "Dumplin'" and "Ekie") as an American phenomenon is for me.

The author cannot deal with this aspect of the Duke's life without fitting it against a background that is of absorbing interest.

There is the background of Ellington's boyhood in Washington; there is the colored American family background; there is the background of Harlem in the '20's. The Jazz Age—that roiling, razzmatazz, gin-soaked, Hudson Super-Six age of bootleggers and Scott Fitzgerald and Harding and interlude-between-wars—was in full stride before Duke and Benny Goodman and Chick Webb (either individually and collectively) "thunk up" swing and stunk up the atmosphere with it.

Background Sections Good

All those sections of the book which deal with background are good, are authentic. The rest of it is not for me.

The rest is for those addicts whose peculiar faculties enable them to hear pristine melody and to divine great meaning in Black, Brown and Beige, Sepia Panorama, and Black and Tan Fantasy.

Me, I'll take the Brandywine Volunteer Firemen's band playing "The Stars and Stripes Forever" with-in stepped up -four-four time.

The Duke Wins Music Poll

By Associated Press

Duke Ellington and his orchestra have been announced as winners of an annual musicians' poll conducted by *Down Beat*, professional music magazine.

Ellington was named best band in both the "swing" and "sweet" divisions, with Stan Kenton second and Woody Herman third in the "swing" classification, and Claude Thornhill and Les Brown second and third, respectively, in the "sweet" group.

Top scorer of the poll was Harry Carney, baritone saxophone player with Ellington's orchestra. He won 4434 votes, nearly double the totals with which Ellington won the band races.

The poll was conducted among musicians and music fans.

Classifications, with first, second and third place winners, respectively, were:

Swing bands—Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Woody Herman.

Sweet bands—Duke Ellington, Claude Thornhill, Les Brown.

Small combination (instrumental)—King Cole Trio, Joe Mooney Quartet, Louis Jordan.

Small combination (vocal)—Pied Pipers, Mills Brothers, Ink Spots.

Male singers (not with band)—Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Perry Como.

Girl singers (not with band)—Peggy Lee, Jo Stafford, Billie Holiday.

King of Corn—Spike Jones, Guy Lombardo, Harry James.

Favorite soloists—Benny Goodman, Bill Harris, Duke Ellington.

For the All-Star Band, the following persons were named first:

Trumpet, Roy Eldridge; trombone, Bill Harris; alto saxophone, Johnny Hodges; tenor saxophone, Vido Musso; baritone saxophone, Harry Carney; clarinet, Buddy De Franco; piano, Mel Powell; drums, Dave Tough; bass, Eddie Safranski; guitar, Oscar Moore; arranger, Billy Strayhorn; male singer (with band), Art Lund; girl singer (with band), June Christy.

Star Vocalists With Ellington Band

Journal & Guide 1-19-46 Norfolk, Va.

Journal-Guide 1-19-46

These three vocalists appeared with the Duke Ellington band in its recent concert in Norfolk at the USO Arena. At left is attractive Joya Sherril, who rendered the lyrics of one of Ellington's classic themes, "The Blues." At right is Kay Davis whose voice was used to simulate an instrument in an Ellington composition. Between them is Al Hibbler, the blind male vocalist, whose renditions of the blues songs was more enthusiastically received than any other of the brilliant features of the concert appearance.

Interracial Cast In 'Beggar's Opera'

Daily Worker 1-22-46 New York, N.Y.

The Duke Ellington-John La Touche Beggar's Opera version, now in final writing stages, has highly novel aspects, one of which is an interracial cast including Negroes, Malaysians, Chinese and Japanese, as well as the white members, all in speaking and singing roles.

Described by producers Dale Wasserman and Perry Watkins as a true "American Jazz Opera," the production is budgeted at $200,000, and boasts the first book score written by Ellington.

Duke's Concert

1-19-46

Musical Treat

Journal and Guide

(Reprinted From Last Week's Late Edition)

NORFOLK — There were those who believed that the "concert" tag on the Duke Ellington presentation here was simply a new-fangled promotion scheme and that what they would hear would be a program of dressed up dance music. They were surprised to find that the Ellington show was really a first class concert and that the music was practically all high class Ellington compositions in the serious vein. Norfolk, Va.

To ears accustomed to the commercial harmonies of popular bands some of the orchestrations seemed, at times, a bit discordant. Nothing like this could be said about the magnificent instrumentalism of the soloists, all of whom are considered top flight on their respective instruments. The fact that the Ellington music is written for the special talents of this high class aggregation of instrumental specialists and the fact that the program was, for the most part, a medium for exhibiting the instrumental soloists at their best combined to make this attraction one of the finest musical treats Norfolk has ever had. 1-19-46

3,000 FANS

A mixed crowd of nearly 3,000 white and Negro patrons showed unanimous appreciation for the sterling tone quality of the notes which came from the instruments of this fine array of perfectionists. While the contrasted harmonies of the Ellington orchestrations found a few dissenters who did not understand the uniqueness of Ellington arrangements, these dissenters were few and far between.

Such a dissent is understandable. Under the impetus of commercial exploitation dance bands got away from the fundamental character of jazz many years ago and began to peddle the smooth, closely coordinated harmonies made famous by the orchestras of Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, et als.

These commercial rhythms went big over the radio and recording outlets. They did not depend on instrumental perfectionism and had nothing of the spontaniety of true jazz. But they became popular. Bands rose to the heights and fell to the depths in a period of a few years as band maestros substituted all sorts of novelties and succeeded one another in rapid succession as "king" of the fickle swing fans.

DUKE GOES ON

Only Ellington, among the big name bands, refused to follow the trend but kept playing his interpretative music which attempted to capture the character of some living experiences as did the music of ancient generations — now called the classics.

The fact that Ellington is now the top band in America attests to the virtue of such single-mindedness. The sweet bands have come and gone. Ellington goes on forever.

It was difficult to forget that this was a different band with a different idea when you first started to hear him at the USO arena last Monday night. But then the amazing procession of expert soloists finally won all but the diehards over. 1-19-46

HIBBLER SCORES

Nevertheless, it was the low down blues singing of the blind Al Hibbler which finally brought the house down and released all the previously inhibited enthusiasms of the Norfolk audience. Here at last was something that they really understood and they went wild. Their appreciation of the finer Ellington arrangements came slowly. In the lobby afterwards and in discussions at homes they began to realize that in Jimmy Hamilton, Sonny Greer, Lawrence Brown, Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, William Anderson, Al Sears, Freddie Guy, Al Lucas, and Taft Jordan, they had heard some of the world's finest musicianship.

But their response to Al Hibbler's sweet blues singing was immediate and overwhelming. Here was something which aroused the same instincts that Sinatra arouses when he sings. It was clearly the most thrilling phase of the concert.

Other highlights included: Johnny Hodges' magnificent slide tones on the saxophone which have made him the nation's most popular saxophonist in "Magents Maze"; the pure tones of Jimmy Hamilton's clarinet in "Air Conditioned Jungle"; the beautiful trombone playing of Lawrence Brown in several solo opportunities; the unspectacular but nevertheless effective work of Drummer Sonny Greer who has proven that it is not necessary for a drummer to turn handsprings and tear the stage set down to do the best rhythm section job in the business.

The crystal clear trumpet notes of William Anderson and Norfolk's own Taft Jordan; the resonant clarity of Harry Carney's big baritone sax; the all-around performance of the brass; the thoroughly professional exhibition of the saxophones — and the bass fiddle demonstration of Al Lucas.

ATTRACTIVE GIRLS 1-19-46

Two attractive female vocalists, Joya Sherrill and Kay Davis rounded out the Ellington ensemble. Miss Sherrill did the blues lyrics from Ellington's famous "Black, Brown, and Biege" suite. In this interpretative number she was very effective.

Miss Davis did not sing lyrics at all. Instead, she used her voice as an instrumental device in "Transblucency" and her notes gave a spectacular effect to the arrangement for several of Ellington's best instrumentalists.

Through it all, Ellington's informal introductions of his themes with footnote clarifications and with interesting tributes to his expert musicians, kept the program from dragging. His own piano contributions, while few, were sparkling.

All in all, it was a rewarding experience to hear the Duke in a high class concert.—LEM GRAVES Jr.

Ellington Band Wins Esquire Jazz Award; Duke Top Arranger

The Journal & Guide 1-12-46 Norfolk, Va.

NEW YORK CITY—The inimitable Duke Ellington has been chosen for the second consecutive year as the top arranger and his band as the top jazz band in Esquire's 1946 All-American Jazz Selections.

And the jazz stylists Benny Goodman, Louis Armstrong, Red Norvo and Coleman Hawkins have been picked for the third consecutive year as the top specialists in the jazz world . . . three-time winners of one of jazz's most coveted awards, the Gold "Esky" Statuette, signifying All-American rating.

The complete list of the ranking jazzmen of the year as picked by Esquire's nationally known board of experts . . . all winners of the 1946 Gold "Eskys" . . . are:

Cootie Williams, trumpet; Bill Harris, trombone; Benny Carter, alto saxophone; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophine; Benny Goodman, clarinet; King Cole, piano; Oscar Moore, guitar; Dave Tough, drums; Chubby Jackson, string bass; Red Norvo, vibraharp; Duke Ellington, arranger; Duke Ellington, band; Louis Armstrong, male vocalist, Ella Fitzgerald and Mildred Bailey, tied, female vocalist.

The jazzmen who will receive Silver "Esky" Statuettes are: Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Vic Dickenson, trombone; Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone; Don Byas, tenor saxophone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Teddy Wilson, piano; Remo Palmieri, guitar; Gene Krupa, drums; Slam Stewart, bass; Stuff Smith, violin; Billy Strayhorn, arranger; Woody Herman, band; King Cole, male vocalist;

The Bronze Award All-American New Stars . . . who, in a new method of selection, were picked by last year's Gold Award winners are: 1-12-46

Pete Candoli, trumpet; J. J. Johnson, trombone; Charlie Parker, alto saxophone; Charlie Venturo, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet; Erroll Garner, piano; Bill de Arango, guitar; J. C. Heard, drums; Junior Raglin, bass; Ray Perry, violin; Ralph Burns, arranger; Woody Herman, band; Billy Eckstine, male vocalist; and Frances Wayne, female vocalist.

In the February Esquire . . . the 1946 Jazz Issue . . . a 15-page section will be devoted to commentaries and photographs of the jazz award winners and to comprehensive articles covering the American Jazz Scene.

TO BROADCAST

As an additional contribution to the appreciation of good American jazz, Esquire has selected twelve of the above individual award winners to appear as soloists in a special one hour broadcast on January 16 . . . a coast-to-coast All-American jazz session over the complete American Broadcasting Company network from 9 to 10 p. m., EST. These soloists will be backed up by the top-ranking Duke Ellington and Woody Herman bands, plus the King Cole Trio . . . and master of ceremonies will be the radio and motion picture star, Orson Welles.

Ellington Sets Carnegie Hall's Biggest Record

By NORA HOLT

(Photos on Back Page)

THE DUKE OF ELLINGTON and his unbeatable band of the age chalked up a record at his Jan. 4 concert that set the attendance at 15,000 people, the largest ever assembled for an orchestral performance in the entire history of the great music hall.

This is no mere fanciful boast. We received it straight from the Carnegie Hall office.

The word orchestra covers all divisions—symphonic, chamber, and popular. As an added tabulation for the files of the historian, the stage was filled to saturation, and more than a hundred seats were sold for a special broadcast of the concert in Chamber Music Hall next door, also a first-time notation.

And to continue on the subject of record-breaking events, announcement will be made giving Duke his second consecutive victory in the annual Esquire All-American Jazz poll as No. 1 band leader and arranger, with Billy Strayhorn runner-up in the latter category.

Since January, 1943, when Ellington made his debut in Carnegie Hall for the benefit of the Russian War Relief, his annual concerts have taken on an ascendency of monumental proportions, evidenced Friday night by the massive audience.

The Duke show-case of compositions each year is decorated with many innovations revealing his restless urge to out distance time itself, by envisioning and capturing music of the future. His rehabilitments of older works like "In a Mellotone" and "Solid Old Man," given a new paint job, showed his sensitivity for framing contrapuntal figures and instrumental coloring that have never, in the history of music, been put on paper.

He supercedes the masters, old and modern, in this creativeness, because he is not confined to classical traditions. And if challenged by purists who dare look askance at his particular style of ingenious designs, his retort fatale is, "Try to put it on paper."

The same epithet was thrown at this writer during an interview back stage after the concert. Being hard put to consistently analyse the myriad play of fascinating but unfamiliar figurations, we discovered a tricky one beginning with two instruments simultaneously running oblique scale passages from a major second of the scale flanked by a background of unusual harmonic structures. We asked about this figure. His reply was, "So—put it on paper." We instantly drew a staff and sketched the passage. Duke chuckled. This and other fanciful inordinations—writing in two unrelated keys, artifices of the modernists, were noted in "Sono" and "Air Conditioned Jungle," a choice spot for Jimmy Hamilton to show his mastery of the clarinet.

Among other offerings that sent the audience into ecstasies, were the famous "Black, Brown, and Beige" and "Perfume" suite; "Take The A Train;" and a new "Tonal Group" divided into Fugue, Rhapsodittii and Concerto for Jam Band. Of these, the four-voice fugue was the most interesting and unsatisfactory. Built on an eight measure theme of diffused intervals, the best we could do was analyse the strict statement or subject, for the development was lost in a maze of "going nowhere" counterpoint and ended in chaotic ineffectuality. The Rhapsodittii was a tone poem painted in the imagery of a Laurencin.

Oscar Pettiford can match facility of pizzacato with any bass player living, and his lacey patterns attenuated with odd rhythms showed his special versatility in "Bassist and Me."

Duke has made "Dancers in Love" from his Perfume suite, a capricious bit of nuantic frivolry, that captivates and grows more delightful at each hearing. The same suite in the Coloratura movement gave trumpeter William "Cat" Anderson a chance to hit those two-octave high C's for which he is noted. In the Ellington group, Diminuendo in Blue, Transbluency, and Crescendo in Blue, Duke made a valuable contribution to novelty in instrumentation by using the bird-like voice of Kay Davis to form a choir with clarinet and tenor sax in the movement "Transbluency." This was a gem of clarity and beauty. Miss Davis' crystal voice blended with the instruments without so much as a feather-edge of deviation in pitch. There was no mistaking the loveliness of this wedding.

Other soloists included the matchless artistry of Taft Jordan, trumpet; Harry Carney, baritone sax; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Al Sears, tenor sax; and Albert Hibbler, singer, who received rounds of applause on rendition of a traditional spiritual, "Nobody Knows the Trouble I See." Others who added to the success of the program were, Joya Sherrill, Otto Hardwick, Claude Jones, Wilbur de Paris, Shelton Hamphill, Francis Williams, Fred Guy, Sonny Greer, drums, and Billy Strayhorn and Mercer Ellington, arrangers.

MUSIC

European

The Duke steps out: Today and when he was 10—always a sharp dresser

The Double Duke

From where most of music sits, it would be tough to write a biography of Duke Ellington. Foreign critics have called him the American Bach, with comparisons to Claude Debussy and Frederick Delius thrown in for admiring measure. To some American critics he is the genius of his time, born to glorify Negro music. But to others, equally articulate, he is a figure grown fat with commercial success, a great jazzman who sold his music out to rehearsed arrangements and concert-hall pretensions.

To this artistic conflict, add a man who never seems to come alive—not even face to face in an interview. At one moment he is a composer who declaims: "The characteristic melancholy music of my race has been forged from the white heat of our sorrows, and from our gropings after something tangible in the primitiveness of our lives in the early days of our American occupation." Match this in the same man who also says: "Now this is sad. It's about one guy sitting alone in his room in Harlem. He's waiting for his chick, but she doesn't show."

Despite all this and other occupational eccentricities evolved by shrewd management and aggressive publicity, Barry Ulanov, editor of Metronome magazine, has written "Duke Ellington,"* a biography which is sincere, interesting, and painstakingly conscientious—down to an index and a complete diskography of Ellington's more than 1,100 records. As a jazz critic who had long admired the Duke and who also stands for the good in "commercial" bands, Ulanov represents the affirmative in the Ellington debate. His conclusions can be argued, but his hero's right to a permanent place in American music cannot be ignored.

The Duke started his first real band 23 years ago. Since then, his indigo harmonics and trick effects have undoubtedly influenced American popular music. Beginning with his first Carnegie Hall concert three years ago (NEWSWEEK, Feb. 1, 1943), however, he made himself fair game for critics who accused him of overreaching himself and going "arty."

His longer, more ambitious compositions like "Black, Brown, and Beige" (soon to be released by Victor in shortened form) have neither the structure of a symphonic work, the punch of an "East St. Louis Toodle-Oo," nor the effectiveness of a "Solitude." But today, at 46, he is still high in the top bracket and, for the second year in succession, he and his band have been chosen at the top of the Esquire All-American Jazz Selections.

Peace . . .: As for Ellington himself, Ulanov freely admits that he has an ambivalent personality—but he ascribes it to the "violently crossed influences of his mother and father." Daisy Kennedy was a woman of uncompromising morals. James Edward Ellington, on the other hand, was a pleasure-lovin' man who began as a Washington, D. C., butler, became a Navy blueprint maker, and then, at 52, retired to live in New York with his famous son.

These conflicting influences make Duke appear to some "a reticent man, completely shy and willfully inarticulate." To others, he seems "a shameless extrovert."

The net result is a man who doesn't think he was "meant to be that happy," but who openly admires every slick chick, gorges on incredible quantities of food, and lavishly spreads himself on the sharpest of clothes. He is also a man who naïvely confesses that "I have talent, if I would only apply myself." But, like Father Divine, he has an all-consuming passion for peace. "Peace," he often says as he finishes his third steak, "is what I want."

Although serious musicians detect in Ellington the influences of Debussy, Ravel, and Delius, the masters touched him only secondhand. The young Duke learned avidly from Will Vodery, a famous Ziegfeld arranger and a schooled musician who reflected the trend of modern music.

The Ellington of today has found the perfect collaborator in little "Weely" Strayhorn, also called "Swee' Pea" because of his resemblance to Popeye's crawling wonder. "Swee' Pea" had a classical background and didn't take to jazz until he was about 20. Now, 30, he knows Duke's style so well that it is getting harder by the day to tell their music apart.

Ulanov's portrait of "Weely," as a matter of fact, is the finest characterization in the book. A hedonistic pixie by nature, Strayhorn has no complicated worries about finding "peace." He knows what he wants in his music and he knows what he wants out of life. Although the Ducal mantle, by inheritance, belongs to Ellington's 26-year-old son Mercer° (who really preferred aeronautics to music), by right of affinity and talent, its voluminous folds will probably fall around the small but sturdy shoulders of "Swee' Pea."

Highbrow Blues

The crowd of 3,000 jive addicts was one of the largest ever to jam Manhattan's Carnegie Hall. Hepsters overflowed into a chamber music hall upstairs to get their rhythms by remote control, piped from the auditorium below. There was no doubt that Duke Ellington, twice winner of *Esquire's* All-American jazz poll, could still make more dollars dance at the box-office than such latter-day swing merchants as Eddie Condon, Lionel Hampton and Hazel Scott.

But for fans of the Duke's *Mood Indigo, Sophisticated Lady* and *It Don't Mean a Thing* days, the concert had the taste of a stale highball. They had come for gin-mill stuff and had been served something more like a bad-year champagne. The Duke once more dragged out such pretentious symphonic items as *Black, Brown and Beige* (listed as "a musical parallel to the history of the American Negro"); *Perfume Suite* ("each section . . . tries to convey the essence of a particular fragrance"). Until late in the evening, when the band got back to being itself on easy-riding bounce tunes, the whole thing sounded more like Andre Kostelanetz than a night in Harlem. Four sessions in Carnegie Hall had had an unmistakably mopey, not to say arty, effect on the Duke.

Ella Fitzgerald Named Member Of International Aid Group

Memphis Tenn. Tribune 4-12-46

NEW YORK — Ella Fitzgerald, whose songs have brought much joy to countless thousands of 'teen agers, has become an active worker in a cause designed to bring happiness to many more children, but this time on an international scale.

Miss Fitzgerald has been appointed working member on the international committee of the Foster Parents' Plan For War Children, an organization established to aid in the normal readjustment of innocent little victims of the war.

In addition to the famous singer, the other internationally important personages on the committee for this humane cause are: Mrs. Harry S. Truman, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the Earl of Listowell, the Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Kate Smith, Booth Tarkington and Representative Clare Booth Luce.

Fri 4-12-46

SELECTED ON MERIT

In announcing the appointment of Miss Fitzgerald last week, Mrs. Edna Blue, plan executive chairman, said that the singer had been selected "because of her untiring efforts on behalf of the children of America."

The plan, which operates 56 children's projects in France, Italy, Malta, Belgium, Holland and England, makes no distinctions as to race, creed or color in aiding the little victims of Nazi aggression.

Ella Fitzgerald's interest in the welfare of homeless and friendless children is no new thing, nor is it purely objective—she was an orphan herself, and, therefore, knows fully the emotional problem that these youngsters must meet.

Ella Fitzgerald Adopts Italian Refugee of War

St. Louis, Mo.

NEW YORK, May 27—Miss Ella Fitzgerald, star of stage, radio and screen, has "adopted" Edoardo Sola, 6½ year old Italian boy in Italy, through the Foster Parents' Plan For War Children, it was announced by Mrs. Edna Blue, Plan executive chairman. American headquarters of the Plan are at 55 West 42nd Street, New York City. 5-31-46

At the present time the Plan is operating fifty-six children's projects in England, Italy, Malta, Belgium, Holland and France.

One of three children in the Sola family, the boy's father was killed while serving in the Italian army. Miss Fitzgerald, through her generosity and interest, has made it possible for little victims of aggression to seek and receive sanctuary in colonies set up for that specific purpose.

D.C. Club Lifts Ban For Ella

Chicago Defender 11.

'Tisket' Star At Five O'Clock' Club

WASHINGTON — Announcement last week of the turnabout position taken by the DAR in donating the full facilities of its Constitution Hall for a concert by the Tuskegee Institute choir next month found a counterpart in the popular music field when the Five O'Clock Club here lifted its bars against Negro artists and pencilled in Ella Fitzgerald for a two-weeks' engagement. 5-4-46

The popular entertainment world hailed this new policy as indicative of a change of attitude among operators in the Dixie belt and may, therefore, be construed as the opening wedge in obtaining new outlets for the exhibiting of top name Negro talent. Choice of the "first lady of song" as the initial artist followed her genuinely favorable reception all over the country—North and South—when she appeared three times on the coast-to-coast Jack Smith radio show sponsored by Proctor and Gamble Company. Sat.

NEW YORK — Ella Fitzgerald won't be singing her swinging nursery rhymes for the entertainment seekers of Madrid, at least not for quite a while.

She has flatly turned down an engagement proffered by the Peter Maurice Agency of London for a personal appearance in the Spanish capitol in mid-January, explaining that she would not consider any engagement anywhere in Spain during the present Franco rule. 6-7-46

Spelling out her objection to the Madrid engagement in detail, the singer said she felt that the whole operation of the Spanish government was patterned along the lines of the Reich state under Hitler.

Baltimore Afro

Said Miss Fitzgerald: "Regardless of the stand taken by some of the diplomats, it can't be denied that Franco was an active ally of Hitler and therefore it could hardly be expected that he ceased subscribing to the fascist ideologies simply because the high priest of fascism and his henchmen suffered military defeats.

"No, I will not be interested in any appearances in Spain until eht political and social air has been purified, which means a change of rulers there."

Ella Aids College Fund

Her Discs Used In Drive Over Radio

Defender

NEW YORK — Enthusiastic reports from the offices of the United Negro College Fund here indicate that Ella Fitzgerald's plaintive interpretation of the popular song hits of the day is a real "sales" stimulant. Following the airing of her recordings for the fund raising campaign of the cooperative college organization increased activity among contributors has been generally noted. Sat. 6-8-46

A few weeks ago the Tisket-Tasket girl granted a request by the directors of the fund to record a transcription to be used on the radio. The record featured two of her best liked current efforts, "You Won't Be Satisfield Until You Break My Heart" and "Oh Lady Be Good." To date, in every area reached by radio station on which the record has been heard there has been unprecedented increases in contributions following the airings, which was the reason for the recordings in the first place.

Ella Fitzgerald Is Chosen Best Singer

The Chronicle Detroit, Mich.

Sat. 8-10-46

NEW YORK — Taking a leaf from the book of the theatrical profession, the popular music fraternity has inaugurated an annual award to the standout performers in the industry. The judges are people in the industry. They have formed the popular music critics' board. Membership is made up of bandleaders, singers and authors of music publications. This authentic group has bestowed on Ella Fitzgerald a most unusual distinction. In their first selection of a popular singer they chose the Tisket-Tasket Girl.

Among those serving on the board making the first annual selection are swing critic Leonard Feather, Jassphile Norman Granz, songwriters Bennie Benjamin and Georgie Weiss, and bandleaders Benny Goodman, Erskine Hawkins, Vaughn Monroe, Count Basie, Lucky Millinder and Stan Kenton.

The popular Music Critics' board will select "bests" in every phase of the popular music industry including bands, instrumental stars, singers and arrangers. In selecting Miss Fitzgerald to head the list of selections to be released Aug. 1, the board placed special emphasis on her unusual facility for improvisation as well as her distinctive voice and individualistic style.

Brazil Fan Starts Fitzgerald Fan Club

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

SAO PAULO, Brazil — Waldemar Granzotto, an ardent jazz fan of this city, has taken a cue from his fellow devotees in the United States and has started the first fan club in honor of singer Ella Fitzgerald. Already there are 32 members in the club.

Having first heard her via a short waved broadcast, Waldemar, who lives at Rua Dr. Alves de Lima 354, gathered several friends at his home to listen when she was scheduled for a subsequent broadcast.

Having thus started the ball of enthusiasm rolling it was easy to recruit new members. This was especially true when a package of a dozen of Ella's best recordings reached Waldemar's home in response to a request to Miss Fitzgerald for same. Sat. 7-6-46

Tisket, Tasket Basket As Aid

Defender Chicago, Ill.

Ella Fitzgerald Helps Lynch Victims

Sat. 9-14-46

NEW YORK — Ella Fitzgerald this week announced the details of a long range fund raising campaign to aid the families of lynch victims. The plan calls for organized contributions by men and women of the theatrical and entertainment professions to aid persons victimized by the savagery of Dixie mobsters. Ella hopes to fill that yellow basket for victims.

Miss Fitzgerald has already invited a number of headliners to serve on the steering committee of the projected campaign. These include Duke Ellington, Canada Lee, Lucky Millinder, Norman Corwin, Paul Robeson, Lionel Hampton, Erskine Hawkins, Orson Welles, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Senator James Mead.

First major effort in the campaign to raise funds for relatives of atrocity victims will be a major benefit to be staged at a New York theater early in the new year.

In order to have a constant flow of money into the coffers for this worthy cause, Miss Fitzgerald is asking band leaders and theatre owners to cooperate with establishing agencies, such as the NAACP, in raising funds in various localities by allocating a part of the proceeds to this fund.

mendous pay check for the current year. Sat. 11-2-46

It was the late Chick Webb who spotted Ella that night at the amateur show and immediately saw inherent stardom in the youngster.

The little drummer put her under the personal management of Harder and Moe Gale, who has managed her ever since. She continuously from then to now, at the Harlem Opera House, has won the contest and the $15 first prize. This week the "first lady of song" signed a new personal management agreement with Gale for the balance of the year.

Ella Ding Dongs Financial Bell; '46 Earnings Top $100,000

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

BALTIMORE — Following her earnings will be considerably third quarterly accounting of 1946 in excess of $100,000. here, Ella Fitzgerald revealed that, based on her income for the initial nine months and her book- ings for the balance of the year.

Duke of Windsor intrigued by Ella Fitzgerald

Tribune
Los Angeles, Calif.

NEW YORK — When the Duke and Duchess of Windsor arrived here recently, one of the former king's first preoccupations was finding Ella Fitzgerald's recording of "Muffin Man." The Duke reportedly heard the Elizabeth folk song swung by short wave while he was en route to the U. S. on the Queen Elizabeth. He managed to get ahold of two copies here and is sending one back to Buckingham palace for the younger members of the royal family. 11-30-46

V-J Day Brought Cheering To Nations

Defender

And A Famed To Ellington Guitarist

Sat. 11-16-46 Chicago, Ill

One of the many features of the DUKE ELLINGTON Concert on the afternoon and evening of Nov 10 was the world famous Django Reinhardt, fabulous guitarist.

When Duke Ellington was giving a performance in Paris he fell in love with Django's great guitar work and he had him set in with the band. And so as soon as the war war over Ellington began the search that brought the famous musician to the U. S. and into the Duke's band.

Django Reinhardt was born in France of Gypsy blood. He explains that his odd name came about when one of his ancestors, found a change of name expedient while traveling Germany and came up with Reinhardt. "Django" is probably nothing more than an euphonious sound that pleased his mother.

Django's first instruments were the violin and the banjo. When the season brought the Gypsies to Paris, he played for pennies at the outskirts of town. At 14 he made his first recordings as banjoist in a small, now forgotten orchestra. The jazz recordings of Louis Armstrong, Ben Pollack, Frankie Trumbauer and Eddie South helped to shape his style.

When he was set to enter big time jazz with the English band leader, Jack Hylton, his home caught fire. He had been asleep when the conflagration started and suffered severe burns. He spent the next 18 months in a hospital, emerging finally with two fingers of his left hand—the hand that frets the guitar and fingers the chords—completely paralyzed.

So Django had to start all over again. He changed his whole system of fingering, eliminated certain chords, and created new tone combinations. Today he has finally exercised the paralyzed fingers into a position enabling him to use the knuckles. With his head full of exciting musical ideas and a flair for improvisation, he has fulfilled his early promise and is rated by many as the greatest of modern guitar virtuosi.

Django came into prominence in 1935 when he formed the Quintette of the Hot Club of France with Stephane Grappelly. The original group consisted of Django, Grappelly, Joseph Reinhardt, Louis Vola, Roger Chaput and Jerry Mengo. A series of Decca recordings, "St. Louis Blues" and "China Boy" gained many followers for the jazz quintette in this country. During the war he was reported to be playing in Unoccupied France and making a number of discs with his New French Hot Club Quintette and other groups for the French Swing label. These include "Swing 41," "Exactly Like You," and "Mabel." 11-16-46

Duke Ellington Again Demonstrates His Superiority In Field Of Jazz

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

Sat. 11-23-46

Duke Ellington whose right to the title of King of Jazz goes unchallenged year after year left Chicago Sunday, after two concerts in the Chicago Opera House, with his position more secure, and his advantage increased.

When the Duke appeared here some eight months ago he presented a new personnel. He had lost such stalwarts as Cootie Williams, Juan Tizol, Rex Stewart, and others. But even then, because of the Ellington way of directing men and music this corner was forced to report: "Only critics were able to detect the lack of something that maintained through the change in personnel."

When Sunday night we again reviewed the Duke Ellington of 1946 that important river had been bridged. The old finesse that has been a part of the Duke Ellington concerts when playing as a unit or when presenting soloists was back. Certainly Chicago has witnessed little music played more perfectly and certainly no more spectacular and sweeter that Jimmy Hamilton's solo version of "Air Conditioned Jungle." Nor have I, as a "Square," observed a more touching rendition of any musical number, symphonic or otherwise, than "The Golden Cress" which featured the unmatched tone of Lawrence Brown's trombone.

Even though the soloists stood out and that also included Johnny Hodges who was soul stirring with sax leads in "Sultry Sunset" and his own "Things Ain't What They Used to Be"; Sonny Greer in "Ring Dem Bells"; Ray Nance on violin and trumpet in "St. Louis Blues," "The Mooch" and others, blending of tone by the entire group also rated raves.

The bass playing of Oscar Pettiford. Sears' work on trumpet; Anderson's smoothness of tone with the Duke always at the piano giving out with music unequalled this season. 'Twas symphonic jazz at its best as played by no other aggregation. 11-23-46

Particularly amazing was the satire on the solid South, a bit of wit told in music that was both sweet and distressing. This medley of tunes programmed as "Magnolias Just Dripping with Molasses" and "The Dinky Railroad Train," with Ray Nance's trumpet featured may have escaped our understanding but appeared to be what the jammed house wanted.

The concert may have left most followers of long haired recitals feeling as I do when listening to one of their best: That I have heard one number played over several times. Yet despite the riffs and runs that please only followers of modern swing it is safe to say even the most severe critic will admit the Duke's performance was perfection in rhythm, tone quality and individual composition. For one must not forget that save for a greatly improved (over anything we've heard this season) version of a W. C. Handy blues medley of "Beale Street" and "St. Louis" blues the Duke played his own compositions, most of them never before heard on air or from the stage.—A.M.

French Dressing

Paris was Paris again. Bejeweled blondes and their bejowled escorts were swarming, last week, to the Folies-Bergère's first new revue since the war began. Called *C'est de la Folie* (It's Madness), this latest mounting of a spectacle that has more tourist appeal than the Louvre or the Eiffel Tower was decidedly up to snuff. It was so glamorously dressed and ndressed by turns that the critics slid right over its dull tunes and dreary gags to write rave reviews.

The spotlight caught the show's two star nudes: blonde Parisienne Nicole Roy, *café-au-lait* Haitian Fortunia.

In a succession of 21 gorgeous gowns, Actress Roy sang, danced and emoted, proved most popular when she limited her toilette to three strategically placed bits of white fluff.

Beauteous 18-year-old Fortunia burned up the stage in a sizzle of tropical dancing. Daughter of a Haitian father and a blonde Polish mother, Fortunia was brought up in Poland, thrown into a Nazi concentration camp during the war, liberated by Negro G.I.s.

HAITIAN FORTUNIA
Beaucoup tricks

Education for the Dance. Reminisced Fortunia in her best throaty pidgin: "At school I learn only classic ballet, but one month with Chicago black boys I learn *beaucoup* tricks, much swing, rumba. They teach me so good I have enough to dance at Folies."

Yet it was not so much sex as sumptuousness that made *C'est de la Folie* a smash hit. In threadbare postwar France, Producer Paul Derval had staged a revue that made many Broadway productions look like sideshows. The quantity of material used for the 1,200 costumes could be measured in miles, and quality surpassed quantity.

Endlessly, actors as well as actresses paraded in satins, velvets, delicate lace, period gold & silver brocades. In one scene Actress Roy used 60 yards of diaphanous veils to conceal none of her charms. For three years the Folies bought, rescued, hoarded every scrap of material, fur, feathers and jewelry it could lay its hands on.

And the sets in the new revue were possibly even more spectacular than the costumes. For the set of a Venetian palace used for three minutes, the paint alone cost 350,000 francs ($2,939).

But, for the cast at least, something was missing: the G.I.s who used to whistle and stamp, shout "Oh, my aching back!" and start climbing out of boxes at every display of nudity. Sighed Actress Roy: "Out front there's no more electricity in the air, and there are no more second lieutenants backstage."

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers (Lionel Hampton)

'Hamp' Swings Out On Jim Crow

Chicago Defender

By EARL CONRAD
(Defender New York Bureau)

NEW YORK—I wanted to know what was behind the story of Lionel Hampton, the master of swing, who took a swing at the "masters" out in Kansas City.

When I learned that Hampton's band was opening at the Strand on Broadway, I hustled down there to get the musician to tell me what had motivated his act of solidarity with his equally famous fellow musician, Cab Calloway.

At the stage door entrance someone got busy on a phone to Hampton's dressing room and in a few seconds I was told, "Go up to the room marked 'California.'" I went up two flights and noticed a large number of dressing rooms, each named after a state.

Full of Energy

Hampton, a medium-sized, dark-brown chap, was getting ready for his next on-stage call. He was in shorts and an undershirt as he ushered me in, told me to relax, and continued dressing. It wasn't my first meeting with the musician. I had met him a few months earlier at his Manhattan apartment, but now, even more so than when I first saw him, I was aware of his energy.

There's no particular reason why Hampton should have more bounding energy than anyone else, as far as I can see, but he's got it. Not big and not small, not lean and not stout, still he bounces about more like a prizefighter than anything else you can think of.

Two valets were running about, fetching things, doing errands; musicians were practicing on their horns in some nearby dressing room, and there was a jazzy wail that was a constant overtone to our interview. Once, Mrs. Hampton, and an accountant rushed into the room long enough to ask Hampton a question, and returned to Mrs. Hampton's room where she was going over some problems of finance.

Cop Starts Slugging

"You know how it is in the music business," he opened, although I didn't really know, "Sometimes you invite a fellow entertainer to your show just to pep things up, just to give your public a little pleasant surprise and make the evening more interesting. I'd invited Calloway to come to my show in Kansas City. Figured that when he came in, we'd give him a big hand, and he'd get up there with me and clown around a little and help put the evening over in a big way. We really wanted to give those white folks a good time.

"Well, then, Cab comes along all right, but when he gets his ticket the rush act begins. The cops tell him a thing or two about Kansas and white folks being white and black being black, and then this cop hits him over the head with a revolver."

LIONEL HAMPTON

At this point Hampton's dark-skinned valet spoke up. "Yes, I hurried in and told Lionel about it. I was the first one to tell him. I didn't see the cop hit Calloway, but I knew something was going on out there, so as soon as I learned what it was, I told Lionel—and then he pulled his band."

"Things We Must Do"

"That's what I want to know about, Mr. Hampton," I said. "How did you happen to do that? What motivated your solidarity with Calloway?"

Hampton was slipping into a pair of light brown trousers. The valet was glancing over the tie that the musician would put on.

"Listen," he said, "I'd have done that for anybody. It didn't have to be Cab Calloway. Those are the things we have to do."

Police Brutality Spreading

I prodded him a bit and here's what he said:

"The kind of thing that happened to Cab seems to be going on all over the country right now. You pick up a West Coast paper and you'll see headlines, 'Public Meeting to Protest Police Brutality.' You pick up a New York paper—a Negro paper, I mean—and you'll see the same thing. The cops are on the march, doing what they're told to do. You read any paper that tells what's going on down South and you find one item after another of colored people getting beaten up for little or no reason at all. It's a routine. They seem to be socking it in, now that the war's over, now that the colored soldiers are coming home, now that they're blocked to find work for people, and figure they can still do business in the same old way.

"Well, with such stuff going on, the only thing we can do is to stand together; and any time a musician can't stand up with another one, that would be too damned bad.

Whites Sympathetic

"Now everybody, including plenty of white pople, have been saying I did the right thing. After we started to pack up a white Southerner, an ex-soldier from Texas, with a real Texas drawl, came up to me and said I was doing the right thing, said that the war was a lot of stuff if colored people couldn't get the right kind of break.

"That dance hall was busy till 2 o'clock in the morning refunding the money, and the boss of the ball begged me to stay on, but I tod him no dice. And even if they couldn't dance plenty of them understood what I was doing and it was okay with them; and if you ask me, Kansas City learned a little ABC."

Then Hampton interrupted his story, "Hey, I've got to go on now. Have you ever seen the band?"

"No, I haven't."

"Okay, come on then," he said, taking me by the arm. He led me down the stairs, guided me around the rear of the stage, through a door leading to the orchestra, and I took a seat to watch the show.

There was a packed house and a swift, steady burst of applause as the curtain went up, as the swing music pealed out, and as Hampton smilingly turned to the audience. About one-fifth of the audience that afternoon was Negro; and I noticed that both Negro and white seemed acquainted with the work of individual players in the band. As Hampton announced them, and as they stepped forward to do solo numbers, the audience greeted them with varying warmth, depending upon their individual popularity. I saw that swing is an art, an avocation, and a pretty personal interest with a large segment of the theatre-going populace.

Hamp Versatile

Hampton himself, with his versatility, is easily the outstanding figure of the band. He seems equally at home with a half dozen instruments, including his famous work with the vibraharp; and in all the time on the stage he never ceases his constant swingtime jogging. He has a natural smile, and generously draws attention to the individual members of his band and to the acts which go with the show.

As the presentation draws to a close, the band members step away from their seats, move forward in an informal jam session and Hampton drifts about in the background, allowing the audience to concentrate on the band rather than himself. It was more than an hour of high entertainment; this was the third time that day that the orchestra had gone on; and they

instances where Negro cultural workers could have taken a stronger stand than they did.

U. S. Jim Crow Pattern

The master of swing swung out again:

"Things like this don't do anybody any good. If cops can beat up people like Cab Calloway—when they **know** it's him—when they know it is a man respected by the whole country, what's going to happen to the average guy who hasn't got prestige to help him get along in life? And that's what I don't like about this situation. There's a mean post-war streak rushing around right now, and we and our white friends have got to put a stop to it. It's Constitution Hall one day, Kansas City another day, and tomorrow it'll be anybody's front door that might be broken down. 1-12-44

"I understand that out in Kansas City most of the dance halls are under the same general Jim Crow ownership and sponsorship. Well, one thing we musicians can do, and might do, is to boycott places that practice Jim Crow. And I think we could get plenty of white bands to do the same thing.

Other Areas of National Life

"Apart from the problems of our own profession, this thing is of course practiced in many other areas of the national life. What happened to Calloway could happen to a Negro labor leader, or a Negro business man, or anyone else. It's all part of the same setup. Negroes, by their cultural contribution, point a moral to white America to mend their ways, get over their prejudices, recognize the abilities and rights of their fellow Americans.

"My people know where they are going, just as my band knows where it is going, and white America had better get to know it. I'm pretty sure my people are going to go on protesting where protest is the thing to do; and they will go on working and planning with whites where that is the thing to do. We have been getting hit over the head with revolver butts for too long. We are very tired of shedding blood in return for contributing to the country's economic and cultural life. I am going to find ways of telling this to my fellow white citizens."

One of the ways in which Hampton expects to do this is through his "Swing Book" to be issued by Negro Story Press in a couple of weeks. This 128-page book will be a record of the Negro's contribution to jazz, and his influence on modern music. There was some hint too that Hampton may put on a series of interracial concerts some time in 1946.

And that's the story of the master of swing, whose real idea is to take a swing at the masters.

LIONEL HAMPTON AND ARLETT COBB AT TENOR SAX
. . . fast and loud but "the real thing," too

Good Enough To Break Rules

There IS Method in Madness In Case of Hampton's Band

IT'S SHEER madness, this Lionel Hampton band. But madness with method. Reed section, brass section, rhythm section . . . all of them delirious. Yet beneath the apparent chaos a sharp brilliance and precision . . . a rightness about each wrong note.

Each time I caught Lionel at the Aquarium, one of New York's midtown restaurants that feature name bands, his unit tried every wild musical idea, every 52nd Street invention in dissonant harmony and jarring dynamics. It added innovations of its own. Sax men, their two hands occupied by keys, used knees to mute the bells of their horns and create new sounds. Trumpets shattered upper registers to reach supersonic heights that, according to the latest jive, could be heard only by dogs!

Two bass violins and three drums were needed to pound out a beat mighty enough to keep together the frenzied reeds and the frantic brass.

When Hampton himself was up front—whether driving at the vibes, shouting catch phrases, leaping at a tom-tom or beating the piano with two fingers used as mallets—the musicians pulled out all stops in a musical orgy that chilled the modernists while it revolted the "real jazz" fundamentalists, who came out of curosity.

Lionel, dripping sweat, sparked not only his men. He had the audience joining in with riffs and phrases, without prompting, in a fantastic community sing. "Hey Baba Re-Bop!"

Instrumentalists getting up for solos stood with one leg forward. Each man stomped violently on the heel of the forward foot whenever his breath was about to expire. This seemed to force an extra grunt of air through the horns at the end of phrases and kept solos from losing their sustained dynamic fury.

By the end of the midnight show, everyone—Lionel, musicians, entertainers, audience—except the callous waiters was exhausted.

Not Top, But Exciting

Certainly Hampton's orchestra, which is due next week at the Howard Theater, is today's most exciting musical organization. I don't say it's the greatest, however, because I have a long-cultivated distrust for music, persistently romantic. And I regret the role this band will play in reinforcing the erroneous conception, held by so many, that real hot music is something played very fast and very loud. Hampton's happens to be that exceptional case where "the real thing" is fast and loud. But as a rule, there is no connection between "heat" on the one hand and volume and tempo on the other.

My first hearing of the fast-moving Hampton orchestra brought back memories of the old Casa Loma band, of the Henderson orchestra during its "Casa Loma" period and of more recent swing bands who play their hot material with a "tight" tenseness.

Unlike all these, Hampton manages to retain a compelling beat, though it can't compare to the relaxed, throbbing rhythm of the old Basie-Lunceford- Goodman- Ellington combinations.

Technically Remarkable

But maybe I'm a sentimentalist. Modernists are subordinating beat in favor of more sophisticated standards. It is no longer objectionable for drum soloists to break tempo or for virtuosi to end numbers with dramatic codas that depart completely from the previously established beat.

Technically, the Hamptonites are quite remarkable. Though their screeching trumpets and bleating tenors often seem to be playing hit-or-miss music, they are merely conforming to the newest set of swing rules. Their versatile boss is the most remarkable of all and on occasion, produces some lovely relaxed melodies on his vibraphone.

Lionel Hampton's Ork Critics, Patrons Hail

By ALVIN MOSES

NEW YORK—Even before the you fight for work in the people's ink started to dry on the contract interest. We can never forget the which brought his large band, the picture we saw the night we spent first of its size and prominence to some five hours with Lionel and play the Aquarium, Lionel Hamp- his bandsmen in this connection, ton spoke out against social pat- the result of the concentrated efterns. He wanted absolutely no forts of this great orchestra lead- embarrassment, no segregated "A-er and his charming (manager) Men" corner so to speak, for his wife...Gladys Hampton. From the army of "colored" admirers who moment you entered the eatery, desired to enjoy the music of the checked your hat, and looked the most talked about band in the crowded main street floor over, country, for a possible seat, you sensed immediately that racial issues were

DOTTED NOTES ON

The Afro-American

LIONEL HAMPTON

Baltimore, Md. Sat. 11-9-46

Has World's Only Gold-Plated Vibraharp

Lionel Hampton is a composer as well as a drum and vibraharp star . . . has written over 100 original tunes . . . among them are his famous "Flying Home," "Hamp's Boogie Woogie," "Air Mail Special," and "The Pencil Broke and That's All She Wrote," . . . makes his own recordings under the Hamp-Tone label.

He has the only gold-plated vibraharp in the world. It cost $3,500 and was given to him by the manufacturer . . . born in Louisville, Ky., April 20, 1914, his family moved to Chicago when he was seven, where he attended grammar and high school. Went to Los Angeles when 16. Worked as soda-jerker by night, studied music at Southern California by day.

His first job was with Paul Howard's Quality Serenaders, then Les Hite, Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman. Appeared with Armstrong and Bing Crosby in Paramount's "Pennies From Heaven" . . . married Gladys Ridley Neal in Los Angeles on Armistice Day 1936. Has recorded both for Victor and Decca.

Organized his own band in Sept., 1940 . . . promoters and theatre owners say: "Play Hampton and take your money home in a truck" . . grossed $66,583 in five one-week theatre engagements. . .his 21-piece band opens Friday at the Strand Theatre on Broadway.

100,000 Attracted To Parade For Lionel Hampton On West Coast

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 8-31-46

LOS ANGELES—The most elaborate demonstration ever accorded a native son took place on Central avenue here last Tuesday when more than 100,000 lined the streets to witness a parade honoring Lionel Hampton's return to California.

Lionel and wife, Gladys, president of Hamp Tone records, were given keys to the city and many other honors were bestowed upon them at an affair held by Curtis Mosby at his popular Club Alabam.

Having traveled more than 90,000 miles and appeared before over a million people since leaving home last December, Lionel and his wife, Gladys, president of Hamp-Tone Records seemed happy to be home.

The people acclaimed him for his ability and genuineness. He has received such honors as "hero" of "Kentucky Day" in Louisville in May. The Interracial award from the Capitol Press club in Washington, the Postal Alliance and NAACP awards in Detroit and numerous other honors and recognition. It was a thrill of a lifetime for the members of the band to see the moving and enthusiastic acclaim given Lionel, their leader and friend.

It is also significant that it was on Central avenue, only a few short years ago that Lionel worked as a drug store cowboy. Curtis Mosby, mayor of Central avenue, played host to Lionel and Gladys at a homecoming Friday night. Hampton was given a trophy, key to the city and other presents in token of the Angel City's esteem for a native son. A galaxy of entertainers, movie personalities and sports figures were on hand. The main event of this affair was the reunion of the maestro with Les Hite whom he teamed with at Frank Sebastian's famed Cotton Club in Culver City more than a decade ago. Mr. and Mrs. Hampton did not join the party until after the last show at the Lincoln theatre where Hamp is currently appearing.

Hampton's eight weeks' stay in Los Angeles will include the Trianon ballroom and the Million Dollar theatre. Hampton and his crew of musicians have just completed a record-breaking tour which began August first at Vancouver, B. C., and covered practically every section of the great Northwest in one night stands.

MGM Buys Film Rights To Hamp's 'Rebop'

Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 10-5-46

HOLLYWOOD—Hey Ba Ba Rebop goes into movies. Samuel Goldwyn, the movie magnate, has purchased the rights to Lionel Hampton's sensational smash hit tune, "Hey Ba Ba Rebop" for a forthcoming picture. You've heard it on juke boxes, you've heard it on your radio, you've heard school kids and tots singing it in the streets, now you'll hear it in the movies.

Danny Kaye, screenland funny man who fills you with mirth in "The Kid From Brooklyn," will soon feature "Hey Ba Ba Rebop" in a movie.

Lionel Hampton, composer of the tune, is now completing a tour of the West Coast, at the Million Dollar Theatre in Los Angeles where he is establishing a new record. He starts across the country in mid-October en route to Broadway's Strand Theatre for a four-week engagement which begins early in November.

From the Strand, the "Hamp" takes his completely "new" show and band into New York's famous Aquarium Restaurant which he opened in the spring as a key spot for name bands.

Hampton's latest hit, "The Pencil Broke And That's All She Wrote," just recorded in Los Angeles is already a box office favorite and is expected to set a new high in sales for records. The "Pencil" now joins Hampton's favorites like "Air Mail Special," "Flying Home," "Hamp's Boogie" and "Sunny Side Of The Street" as hits.

Score Another For 'Hamp'

The Defender Chicago, Ill Sat. 10-26-46

Ork Leader Out To Aid Songwriters

LOS ANGELES — Lionel Hampton, cavorting king of the vibraharp and drums, is developing a plan to encourage Negro songwriters. The ace hidebeater and vibes king said that he is in the process of composing a jazz concerto.

Since it is Hampton's plan to base this new work on primitive African rhythm, he is at present occupied with details of research, tracing back to the primal germ of the primordial egg of jazz—a subject to which Hampton knows well.

According to Hampton, "Swing is as much a part of this country's advancement as is the atomic power recently discovered. It represents the exuberant spirit that is America. Youth impetuous in its ever-searching daring spirit is SWING.

"Youth will give to swing its cultural advancement, and youth is full of freshness."

Hampton has been delving into the realm of jazz for a long time—since University of California days. He has been dreaming about it ever since, and will continue to do so, he says, until such time as he is set to launch the venture. In this project, the "Hamp" intends to call upon young composers throughout America to share honors with him.

Big Concerts Planned

As Hampton sees it now, his orchestra will play the Philharmonic Symphony, say in large concert halls with symphonic orchestras in Paris, London and Vienna. There seems to be no end to his plans.

Race Relations Work Wins Kudo For Vibes King

Courier
Pittsburg, Pa 2-16-46

WASHINGTON—The Capital Press Club this week announced that it would honor Lionel Hampton, noted bandleader, at a testimonial dinner to be held on March 3. Naming Hampton as the outstanding bandleader of 1945, the club will cite him "for outstanding achievement in the field of music and race relations," according to John H. Young, III, president.

"The dynamic personality of Lionel Hampton has made him one of the greatest living Americans. From a lowly soda jerker on a night shift while studying music at the University of California, Hampton has risen to such eminence and distinction that we find it impossible to name anyone else in this our first of such selections," the statement read.

CITES BOX OFFICE APPEAL

"Nevertheless," the announcement stated, "we would like to point out that the tremendous box office records set by Hampton throughout the country stand as ample proof of his recognition by lovers of dance music.

The Press Club said that Hampton's decision to discontinue playing at a dance in Kansas City when he discovered that Cab Calloway, a fellow bandleader, had been mercilessly attacked by a local policeman "was one of the deciding factors in granting him a reward in race relations."

"The principle upon which Hampton stood that evening must not go unrewarded. His action sets an ideal example that should become the fundamental precept of all Negro bandleaders who have, as much as any other group, contributed to the progress of their race

Playing with Hampton's Band Just Another Job to Fields

Afro American Baltimore, Md
Sat 2-16-46

(Editor's Note: Fields formerly fronted his own outfit prior to World War II, disbanding to go into the services.)

ELIZABETH, N.J. — Herbie Fields, dark-complexioned white saxophonist and an Esquire contest winner with Lionel Hampton's band, currently playing New York's Strand Theatre, is the only white member of a big time outfit.

HERBIE FIELDS

A native of Elizabeth, he has been with the band for more than a year sharing traveling hardships with other members. Long tours have carried them to the West Coast and through the South without incident.

Lucky Millinder recently had three white members in his band, but when they played certain sections of the south, the white musicians had to darken their faces with burnt cork before being allowed to play.

Colored Left Behind

Charlie Barnet and other white liberal bandleaders have used colored musicians and vocalists but usually left them behind when making southern tours.

Fields let it be known recently during an interview with New York's PM that he was doing all right, but that he had learned a lot. Telling of his connection with the Hampton band, he said:

"When I joined up with Lionel, I didn't think one way or the other about colored and white. I joined for the music because I think Lionel's a great musician in modern music. I soon found out.

"You can't understand what it's like to be colored. Lots of people are sympathetic, sure. They're against prejudice and they like to say so and let it go at that. But you really get the feel of it when you're mistaken for colored.

"Sure, I look white, but in the South they can't believe a white man would work and live with colored, so they figure I'm colored, too.

Sat 2-16-46

"I can hear them around me all the time. They keep whispering, and a lot of them can't keep it down to a whisper, either. I hear them asking, "Is he white? Is he colored?"

Makes No Difference

"And some of them come up and ask me. Know what I do? I won't tell them. It makes no difference to me and it shouldn't make any difference with them, so the hell with 'em.

"Maybe you think we're sticking our necks out to play in the South, but Lionel wants to do it. And when he plays a white dance, he plays a colored one too, in the same city. If we can't go to a white hotel then we go to a colored hotel and it makes no difference to me.

"I'm damned if I'll go ahead and say I'm white to get preferential treatment. We work together and we can damn well live together."

Fields was playing with the band for a white dance in Kansas City when Cab Calloway was assaulted by a white special policeman when he entered the dance hall to see Hampton. Fields laid down his instrument and walked out with the band in protest over the incident.

"That was the end of that dance," Fields said. He concluded by saying: "Sometimes I feel ashamed for the white people."

Capital Press Club Pays Tribute to Lionel Hampton

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

WASHINGTON

Highlighted by a stirring speech by Canada Lee, the unveiling of a sculptured bust of the honoree, and presentation of an achievement trophy, the Capital Press Club, recently honored Lionel Hampton at a testimonial at Club Bali.

The three-hour affair, attended by 250 guests, was climaxed by presentation of the 26-inch cup by the CPC chairman, John Young III, to Lionel Hampton, "for outstanding achievement in music and race relations."

Hampton's wife, Gladys, who serves as her husband's business manager, shared the honors with him, receiving a bouquet of flowers from the CPC.

Oliver LeGrone, Detroit sculptor, unveiled a hard-carved bust of Hampton swinging his baton and flashing his winning smile. The bust was the gift of admirers in Detroit. 3-16-46

Lee Lauds Bandleader

Canada Lee paid tribute to Hampton for his fighting spirit in battling discrimination in the business world and his brilliance in music. The stage and radio star also flayed the colored literati and intelligentsia for socially ostracizing themselves from those who hold less prominent places in the scheme of activity, but who are undoubtedly more race conscious than their brothers and sisters.

Lee, who also was celebrating his birthday, waxed emotional throughout his talk. He took a slap at Congress, flaying the legislative body for its failure to admit colored newspapermen to the press galleries. 3-16-46

Hastie Speaks

Others, who praised Hampton as a man fighting the way he knows best—by his music, included Judge William H. Hastie, governor-designate of the Virgin Islands; William Bailey, president, local musicians' union; Shep Allen of the Lichtman Theatre chain; Jay Carmody, drama critic of the Washington Star; Ted Poston, of NYC; and Roy Garvin of the AFRO-AMERICAN, and Mrs. Venice Spraggs.

After the testimonial, some 2650 dance followers attended the dance given by Hampton's band at the Lincoln Colonnade. A 15-minutes radio skit was broadcast from the Colonnade at 11:15 p.m. Sat.

Now on Broadway

Now currently appearing at the Aquarium Restaurant on Broadway, Hampton has added another laurel to his swingdom wreath as he was selected over 10 topnotch bands to inaugurate the big band policy of this popular New York cafe. 3-16-46

In response to thousands of requests from fans below the border, his Swing Book, scheduled to come off the press on Friday (Mar. 15), will be translated into Spanish.

From the Swing Book proceeds, Hampton has announced that he is establishing a music scholarship fund for a young man and a young woman.

Hampton Peeved over Esquire Band Selections, Challenges Herman's Herd to Battle of Jazz

Afro American, Baltimore, Md. 2-9-46

By DON DE LEIGHBUR

NEW YORK — "I'll outplay any day, any night, any time, and anywhere," Woody Herman wasn't considered the top band selection for man and Duke Ellington. quire's top band 1946, by Lionel Hampton who named maestro waxed That's the challenge tossed into eloquent when the face of Woody Herman, Es- mixed of the year by the Esquire experts deluged upon him in his dressing room while he at the Strand Theatre

Broadway, following publication of the Esquire All-American Jazz Band selection for this year.

Bobby-Soxer Opens Debate

A bobby-soxer opened the conversation that sent Hampton into a rage with the remark that the bobby-sox crowd felt "brought down" because his band had been by-passed. 2-9-46

"We love and appreciate Duke Ellington," she said, "but everybody knows the band for kicks is

yours, Lionel." She was a white girl.

"The injustice was done when the critics allowed sentiment to get in the way of good and fair judgment in picking Duke Ellington and Woody Herman as the two most outstanding swing bands of the year."

"Cats" Must Be Blind

"I believe those cats must be blind," put in a colored youth as he got Hampton's autograph on his book. "I don't argue against their choice of Woody Herman; he undoubtedly is the greatest white swing crew around when you're picking them for swing and good jazz; but Duke didn't get in your class this year, Lonel, and we all know it.

"That was shown in the broadcast from the radio theatre when Ellington and Herman were put together in what was really a battle of swing.

"I sure felt bad as Herman and his boys got the best of Duke. We all feel he did, because Duke just wasn't hitting while Herman, Chubby Jackson, Bill Harris and the others were riding like mad and jumping all the way."

Would Know What to Do

"I sure wish your band had been up there against Woody Herman instead of Duke's," put in a colored girl of 17. "I bet you'd make Woody fall off. After all, Lionel, Woody uses all your stuff; he even tries to use your riffs. He grabs everything in sight. But I bet you'd know what to do. Wouldn't you?"

"I'll outplay Woody Herman any day, any night, any time and any where," Lionel said in a matter-of-fact tone. "My boys really want some of him. We've been praying that someday or somewhere we could get Woody into a battle of music. He'll know what it means if he does get up against us."

Hampton then went on to elaborate.

"We created just as much as Ellington," Hampton declared. "By that I mean, we feature boogie-woogie and blues orchestrated and ride tunes. Our arrangements are as unusual and outstanding as those of any other band. That's why today my band is the most copied of all the swing crews.

Patterns After Hampton

"Even now, Woody Herman is trying to get another bass player so he can have two like we do. I think I am the first big band leader to put in two bass players to accentuate the rhythm section.

"Look at what we carry: five trumpets, five trombones, five saxes, piano, drums, guitar, two bass fiddles, guitar, drums piano, vibes, and baritone sax. And look at our soloists: there's Arnett Cobb who plays as much if not more tenor sax than anybody else in the business.

"Then there's Herbie Fields, our great white alto sax player, who all critics agree is the top man. And there isn't a pianist in any band who can stand up to my Milton Buckner. There's the man for you. That guy plays what some folks call "arranger" chords and that's what makes such numbers as 'Hamp's Boogie Woogie,' and 'Beulah Boogie,' and others such solid tunes with so much rhythmic background.

Says Others Copy Riffs

"Every band with any kind of name is using riffs my band originates, including Woody Herman. We originate them; they copy 'em, —I mean Woody and all the others.

Hampton then stressed the fact that his one big desire for 1946 is to battle it out with Woody Herman and his Herd for musical supremacy.

"I'll meet him on Seventh Ave. or on Broadway at 1 or 4 o'clock in the morning. I'll take him on at noon, anywhere. I'll give every nickel of my end to charity, just to settle once and for all who has the greatest swing band," he concluded.

Capital Press Club to Honor Hampton

WASHINGTON

John H. Young, president of the Capital Press Club, stated Saturday that the Capital newsmen had selected Lionel Hampton as the "bandleader of the year" and would honor him in a testimonial dinner at Club Bali on March 3.

In making the selection the Capital newsmen differed with Esquire and Downbeat, emphasizing the fact that the contributions of the bandleader to the race question was one of the determining factors in their decision.

Hampton Takes Lead In Band Division

By CONTEST EDITOR

The fight for top honors in the vocalists' division of the annual popularity poll reached the over-worked-poker stage this week with Billy Eckstine, Al Hibbler, Ella Fitzgerald and Billy Holliday supplying the atomic power.

Miss Fitzgerald maintained her hold on first place but Hibbler lost out in the men's division when Billy Eckstine's friends rallied to send the famed baritone into the lead. In the female lineup, Billy Holliday gained on Ella but not enough to take over the lead.

Big surprise in the large bands division was the big leap taken by Lionel Hampton. Last week the vibraharp star was in second place with Duke Ellington leading. However when the votes were counted Sunday "Hamp" had moved ahead of the Duke by some 2,000 votes.

Lionel's main support came from New Jersey where his fan club of which Dolores Harris is secretary, is laboring to put their star over. Likewise from New York where Lionel recently set an all-time record for one week at the Apollo Theatre.

King Cole and Louis Jordan continue to lead the Specialty Artists and small bands group but the Honeydrippers, Eddie Heywood, Four Vagabonds and Bill Kenny's Ink Spots continue to threaten.

The bands have been consistent, especially among the top ten, with Hampton, Ellington and Basie receiving most support. The Count's biggest aid has come from New York and the West Coast. This of course is due to recent appearances in New York and the pictures Basie has made that were released recently.

Remember the contest closes on April 1, which means two more issues will carry the coupon for voting. Final tabulation will not be made until two weeks later when the results will be announced.

All winners will be awarded trophies, perhaps at a public crowning ceremony which will likely be broadcast. The results will be carried in several other publications and on the radio since several requests for the "finals" have been made by various radio publications.

LARGE BANDS

Name	Votes
LIONEL HAMPTON	36,198
Duke Ellington	34,233
Count Basie	29,876
Erskine Hawkins	21,089
Cab Calloway	19,076
Sweethearts of Rhythm	17,089
Cootie Williams	17,009
Eddie Vinson	17,001
Earl Hines	16,786
Jimmie Lunceford	16,566
Lucky Millinder	16,432
Tiny Bradshaw	16,323
Buddy Johnson	15,467
Eddie Mallory	15,328
Andy Kirk	15,098
Billy Eckstine	15,000
Louis Armstrong	14,876
Ernie Fields	14,754
Claude Hopkins	14,653
Louis Russell	14,479
Benny Carter	12,980
King Kolax	12,653
Lil Green	12,534
Noble Sissle	10,176
Darlings of Rhythm	10,090

SMALL BANDS

	Votes
LOUIS JORDAN	39,908
Honeydrippers	23,090
Eddie Heywood	20,087
Earl Bostic	20,022
Tab Smith	20,008
John Kirby	19,765
Rex Stewart	17,170
Dallas Bartley	15,085
Phil Moore	15,043
Red Allen	15,008
Ray Nance	15,003
Red Saunders	15,001
Cornelius Davis	14,009
Jesse Miller	12,008
Hillard Brown	10,090
Cannon Swingsters	10,007

Specialty Artists

	Votes
KING COLE TRIO	41,097
Ink Spots	21,864
4 Vagabonds	20,075
Charioteers	19,006
Mills Brothers	17,065
4 Brown Dots	17,003
Red Caps	14,986
Golden Gate	14,089
4 Kings Of String	12,390
Delta Rhythm Boys	12,066
4 Jumps Of Jive	12,055
Cats 'N Jammers	12,037
Deep River Boys	12,000
Leonard Ware Trio	12,000
Ike Perkins Trio	12,000
Johnny Moore Blazers	9,678
4 Tons Of Rhythm	9,554
3 Loose Nuts	9,432
4 Shades Rhythm	9,329
Clarence Black Trio	9,176
Bob Carter Trio	8,098
Rhythm Rascals	8,007
Red and Curley	8,003
Jones Brothers	5,101
Buster Bennett Trio	5,100

Male Vocalists

	Votes
BILLY ECKSTINE	33,985
Al Hibbler	29,064
Lord Essex	19,854
"Gatemouth" Moore	15,085
Jimmie Mitchell	15,005
Louis Armstrong	15,003
Jimmie Rushing	15,001
T-Bone Walker	14,809
Wynonie Harris	14,655
Rubel Blakey	14,554
Mel Moore	14,432
Sonny Carter	11,090
Eugene Carruthers	9,179
Earl Warren	9,165
Bob Anderson	9,153

Female Vocalists

	Votes
ELLA FITZGERALD	37,987
Billy Holiday	30,543
Lena Horne	27,980
Thelma Carpenter	23,180
Joya Sherrill	15,109
Dinah Washington	15,006
Savannah Churchill	15,004
June Richmond	15,001
Madelyn Green	11,980
Dottie Saulters	11,756
Ida James	11,543
Marva Louis	11,432
Kay Davis	11,323
Una Mae Carlisle	11,232
Ivy Anderson	11,090
Winnie Brown	9,189
Betty Mays	9,088
Dolores Parker	9,022
Annistene Allen	9,006
Ella Johnson	9,001
Mary Hall Pemberton	8,065

Capital Press Club Honors Lionel Hampton

Among the 250 guests at Club Bali Sunday were, left to right, Judge William H. Hastie, governor-designate of the Virgin Islands; Mrs. William Postles, of Detroit; Lionel Hampton, Canada Lee, Oliver La Grone, sculptor, and John Young, 3rd, who watch as La Grone unveiled bust of Hampton presented by admirers in Detroit.

Crowned King Before Throng

Then Artist Shows Why He's Selected

Lionel Hampton, voted "Number One Band Of The Year" in an international poll conducted by this newspaper several weeks ago, was acclaimed anew Saturday night as more than 3,000 patrons packed the Regal theatre to witness the official crowning.

It was Hampton Day in Chicago. Not only did he attract the largest single day's jam to the theatre but once the house settled the vibraharp star put on a show unequaled in Regal history. He had arranged new songs especially for the occasion but if you know Hamp fans you know they aren't coming out just for something new. They know well what the ork leader has in his musical bag and they take that first and then settle for the new. That is why the house roared continuously for such numbers of "Bob Re Bob," "Flying Home" and "Hamp's Boogie."

The coronation, staged at midnight, included the entire Hampton show. Wini Brown and Madelyn Green were terrific in handling the program's vocals.

Then to the strains of Hampton music Red and Curley, one of the best acts in the business, put on a show that set the house on its heels. Curley particularly, was terrific in the "Flying Home" specialty performed with the aid of Hampton. It's unmatched for musical grooviness. Then the Rimmer Sisters took over with a dance routine that outdid anything seen here since the Edward Sisters. Like Arnett Cobb, sax and Milt Bucker, piano they keep the bill in the groove while Lionel draws well earned breath.

For Little Johnnie Griffin it was a homecoming. The teen-age sax ace, a Hampton protege and a former DuSable high student has grown up in ability. His effort set the house on fire anew and but for refusals to answer curtain further might still be playing. It was a grand musical, dance, and song dish the king of band leaders put on for his admirers.

As at all coronations the king must have his spot and that is what came to Hampton as he was presented with the huge trophy emblematic of victory in the "Band of the Year" contest. The cup was presented by The Chicago Defender with City Editor David Kellum making the presentation. Then each man in the ork was called to the floor to be awarded individual buttons with inscriptions indicating they were members of the year's greatest ork. The show may be repeated another year—it will never be topped.

Eddie Haywood, Master of the 88, Will Play in Memorial Hall, June 5

Kansas City Mo.
The Call
5-31-46
Friday

"His Highness"—Let's "Begin the Beguine" with the master of the swing piano—Eddie Heywood and his orchestra—who comes to Memorial hall, Kansas City, Kas. on Wednesday night, June 5 with his interpretative piano fingerings, modulations, improvisations, and all else that implies royalty of the Steinway 88.

The maestro's famous renditions: "I Cover the Water Front," "On the Sunnyside of the Street," "Lover Man" and many others—some old and some new—blended together in a veritable rainbow of brilliant tonal color and harmony.

Heywood, a native of Georgia, is the son of an arranger, composer and pianist, and following in his father's footsteps, has won national applause for his own arrangements. For two years he played with Benny Carter after which he left and organized a band of his own.

Since that time, he has broken records at such places as the famous Three Deuces; Chicago Downtown theater; Shepps Playhouse and Billy Bergs in Hollywood. He has made recordings with Decca, appeared on Bing Crosby's show, also has made six records with the crooner, and made numerous appearances on the Kate Smith Hour.

Though Heywood has never played before Kansas City audiences he is destined to be a success.

EDDIE HEYWOOD

Crosby, Heywood to Push Saxette

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

HOLLYWOOD — Bing Crosby, whose first sacred recording "Silent Night," has passed the 300,000 sales mark, will do a religious album representing all races, and will donate the proceeds to the National Federation of Churches. This he stated on the Louella Parsons broadcast Sunday night. Following this broadcast, Jimmie Fiddler, commented on his program that Crosby would join Eddie Hywood, pianist, in manufacturing a new instrument invented by Heywood, a saxette, a combination of tenor saxophone and trombone.

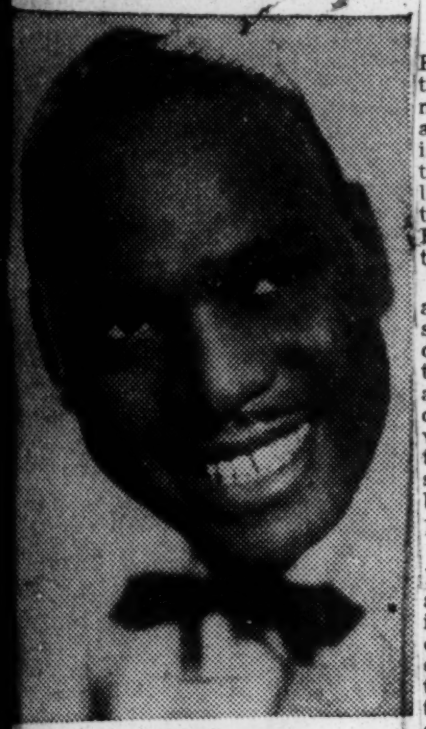
Eddie Heywood

Sat. 9-7-46

Hines Observes 20th Year With New Ork, New Music

The Afro-American, Baltimore, Md. Sat. 10-19-46

NEW YORK—On November 1, Earl Hines, pianist and bandleader, celebrated his twentieth year in showbusiness and, typical of his restless genius, he is celebrating with a new band and a new musical idea.



EARL HINES

Although Hines is celebrating the anniversary of a jazz-swing piano style which has consistently put dollars into the bank for him for the past 20 years, he has made a radical switch in his style and is on the verge of a class-jazz innovation which has rocked the entertainment business with a concussion to that of the atomic bomb.

Hines has not forsaken jazz, and he does not neglect the new hit dance tunes, but he is attempting to bridge the gap between jazz and the semi-classics in a style which embodies all the rhythmical excitement and jazz enthusiasm of swing music and yet employs the powerful instrumental effects and the brilliant orchestra voicings of classical music.

Cross Tatum and Tchaikovsky, Hampton and Haydn, Bach, boogie and barrelhouse, and you have a mild concept of Hines' new style.

'FATHA' HINES MARKS 20 YEARS AS LEADER

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 10-26-46

NEW YORK CITY—This week Earl Hines is celebrating his twentieth year in musical show business. Although he still looks like a youngster, and although his band is as fresh and modern as any in the business, Hines has been tickling a piano as a profession since the days of the Grand Terrace Ballroom in Chicago, way back in the late Twenties.

But Earl Hines celebrating the anniversary of a jazz-swing piano style which has consistently put dollars into the bank for him for the past twenty years, has made a radical switch in his style, and is on the verge of a classi-jazz innovation which has rocked the entertainment business with a concussion equal to that of the atomic bomb.

PLAYS ALL KINDS

Hines has not forsaken jazz, for he plays many of the fine standards which have been his identifying pieces in past years, and he does not neglect the new, hit, dance tunes. But he is attempting to bridge the gap between jazz and the semi-classics in a style which embodies all the rhythmical excitement and jazz enthusiasm of swing music and yet employs the powerful instrumental effects and the brilliant orchestral voicings of classical music. Cross Tatum and Tchiakovsky, Hampton and Haydn, Bach, boogie and barrelhouse, and you have a mild concept of Hines' new style.

According to the maestro, "People are musically smart today, but they also know the meaning of the word "sincerity" and they know that jazz music is "sincerity" blown through a horn or tickled out of a piano or guitar. The answer was simple, give them fine music and give them sincerity. I've tried to do just that!"

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers (Billie Holiday)

Billie Holiday Tries It Solo

Admirers of Billie Holiday's singing—they range from Sinatra and Leonard Bernstein to vast numbers of just plain people—will have the rare opportunity of hearing the *Strange Fruit* singer for two solid hours Saturday afternoon at Town Hall.

Miss Holiday's concert, which will begin at 5:30 p.m., will mark the first time a jazz singer has done a solo program in a New York concert hall.

Miss Holiday's sponsors, Robert Snyder and Greer Johnson, hope this ambitious undertaking will spread her outside the night clubs to which she has largely been confined. They point to the statement made by jazz expert Leonard Feather about Miss Holiday: "She is not only the greatest girl singing today, she is also the greatest singing bet Hollywood ever ignored."

Miss Holiday will sing upwards of 20 numbers Saturday. *Strange Fruit*, the song about a lynching that she brought to international fame, will conclude the recital. Other selections will include *Solitude, I Cover the Waterfront, What Is This Thing Called Love?, Body and Soul, Don't Blame Me, The Man I love, Embraceable You, I Can't Get Started* and *Summertime.* 2-14-46

A composer as well as a blues singer of distinction, Miss Holiday will also offer her own *Fine and Mellow, Billie's Blues, God Bless the Child* and *Hush Now, Don't Explain.* She will be accompanied by Joe Guy, trumpeter; Tiny Grimes, guitarist; Joe Springer, and Eddie Nicholson, drummer.

Although this concert is her first solo recital, Miss Holiday has been heard in the concert halls in various jazz concerts in the past few years, notably at the Metropolitan Opera House two years ago, when she sang on the *Esquire* program.

Billie Holiday

Will Hollywood Take Notice?

Nervous at first, Miss Holiday was soon restored to confidence by the obvious adoration of her audience. She seemed happy with her audience, she enjoyed being among friends, and she sang as few of her followers have ever heard her sing before. Gone were the moodiness she has sometimes shown in her night club work, the hostility toward the 52nd St. crowds, the reluctance to perform that have often made her seem a singer with no real love of her work. At Town Hall Saturday she was glad to be singing. Perhaps no less so than the audience was to be hearing her.

Summertime, I Can't Get Started With You, Fine and Mellow—The Man I Love, My Old Flame and *Billie's Blues* — sung exultantly, sung sadly or wickedly, sung memorably—were among the numbers on Miss Holiday's program. Through them all, Miss Holiday maintained her usual personal austerity, here refusal to distract the listener from her music with tricks of "personality." For her the voice conveys all. The knee marking time beneath her shimmering gown, the ringed fingers snapping now and then—these serve only to help her keep rhythm. And even these were abandoned when Miss Holiday sang the tragic, haunting *Strange Fruit:* Mon 2-18-46

Black body swinging in the
Southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the
poplar trees.

If there was any complaint to be made about Miss Holiday's first solo concert, it was that too many of the songs had distinction only because she was singing them. There might have been more blues and less Tin Pan Alley, more real jazz and less of the Hit Parade kind of thing. Let's hope Miss Holiday will consider that in her next concert. And may it be very soon.

BILLIE HOLIDAY HAILED IN SOLO JAZZ CONCERT

Town Hall was sold out, late yesterday afternoon, when Billie Holiday, the famous jazz singer, gave her first solo concert. Besides the regular tickets, fifty seats were placed on the stage and another fifty general admissions were sold out a few minutes after they went on sale.

Such popularity was obviously well deserved, since Miss Holiday's debut was one of the best jazz concerts encountered by this reviewer in several years. Her style is, of course, one of the most remarkable in the field. She gives each song a kind of poetry suggestiveness which, mixed with generous quantities of personal charm, makes her singing attractive and, at times, moving. Sun 2-17-46

Like most distinctive jazz artists, she makes each song fit her talents and, for concert purposes, one might wish occasionally for a change from her accustomed leisurely pace. But you go to hear Miss Holiday, and that almost monotonous, off-beat blues tempo is part and parcel of her style.

Besides Miss Holiday's talents, there were other reasons why yesterday's concert was a pleasant occasion. Firstly, the concert was not overlong. Secondly, it was well organized and ran smoothly, without endless delays.

Her program included such Holiday specialties as "All of Me," "Trav'lin Light," "You Better Go Now," "My Old Flame" and "I Can't Get Started," as well as a group of her own songs. The audience, needless to say, was delighted with Miss Holiday and her singing.

M. A. S.

Jazz Singing To Remember

I've got the world in a jug,
The stopper in my hand.

Mon 2-18-46

That's how it was Saturday afternoon for Billie Holiday, blues singer in the great tradition, and the eager army of her devotees that crowded into Town Hall to hear her. Miss Holiday, seemingly tireless, brought to a full program of blues and ballads the spirit and intensity and individuality that have made her unique—and widely copied—among popular singers.

Billie Holiday Sounds Off Against Segregation in Gotham Nightery

NEW YORK—Recently returned from Hollywood where she completed her first picture assignment in Jules Levy's "New Orleans," a story of the history of jazz, Billie Holiday, America's No. 1 stylist, last week, sounded off against some of New York's biggest night clubs which continue to practice segregation.

"I hate those East Side clubs that hire colored entertainers and refuse to cater to colored customers," she told the AFRO in an exclusive interview at Club Down Beat, where she is currently fulfilling an 18-week engagement. "Why do they have to discriminate against people?

"When I go there, they put me in a corner together with the rest of the colored customers . . . they have a marvelous way of getting all of us together where we can't be seen by the whites.

"Then, when they learn I'm Billie Holiday, they immediately become apologetic and switch me to the ringside where I have a perfectly horrible time. I find I can't enjoy the show any longer because of what's happened and I pick up and walk out.

No Special Attention

"All I can say is that I hate that kind of treatment. I want to be treated like a girl out with gentlemen. I don't want special attention because of my name. It's rotten . . . the whole thing!"

Although it hasn't been released yet for publication, Billie, a favorite of those in the jazz "know," will record for Decca again has been chosen by "Esquire" as the No. 1 vocalist in the country for the fourth consecutive time.

The Baltimore-born singer has a strange and sophisticated voice which has earned her a unique place in the history of the blues. Often called the musician's musician, critics have labeled her the greatest living exponent of jazz singing.

Income Around $40,000

Her income, estimated at upwards of $40,000 a year, hasn't changed her fighting spirit against jim crowism one bit. At every opportunity, she lashes out against second-class treatment of her race.

"If I made a million a year, I'd have to spend all of it," she continued. "Manager's fees and government taxes eat up most of it anyway. Why, I have to pay $225 a month for a Village apartment; and everywhere I go, people hear that I'm Billie Holiday, they charge me the highest prices."

"New Orleans" will be released in New Orleans around Feb. 15 in time for the annual Mardi Gras celebration. Billie did three songs in the picture: "Blues Are Brewing," "Storyville" and "New Orleans," and has bestowed a loving friendship on her big German boxer dog, "Mister." Billie regards him as the title "know," which she will record for Decca next month.

Busy on West Coast

During her 10 weeks on the West Coast, she also filled a night club engagement at the Club Savoy and gave a jazz concert at the Shrine Auditorium. This was her sixth trip to Hollywood.

Insiders point out that the reason she wasn't called for picture work before was due to her absolute refusal to do degraded, stereotyped roles. She waited until the

BILLIE HOLIDAY

Kenny

BALLADS

THAT'S OUR BUSINESS

Miami Herald

Bill (Ink Spots) Kenny

Tells Ted Yates How Quartet Hits High Note With Popular Ballads

Miami Florida

2-16-46

"TELLER, am I glad to see you!" It was Bill Kenny's voice.

The leader and tenor of America's No. 1 quartet had just entered his dressing room at the Cafe Zanzibar after doing the first show on opening night.

"Well," he continued, "I know what you want to know."

"You do, huh?" I quipped.

"Sure, you reporters always ask about how we did on the road and what numbers the fans went for most of all," Kenny said, showing that popular broad grin of his that has made him a favorite with everyone. "But not to spoil your interview, Ted," he added, "actually, what is it this time that you'd like to know?"

3-16-46

"I'm anxious to learn what type of songs the crowds are going for in various sections of the country. Do they like blues, swing or — ?"

"Ballads," Kenny broke in and at the same time waved a "beg pardon" as he did.

"Sweet stuff, huh?"

"Precisely, Ted," Bill pointed out, "and, do you know sumpin' — that ballads is our business?"

Co-ordination

"In our trip throughout the country; north, south, east and west, I took particular notice of the reaction between the various types of songs that the fans went for in a big way." The tenor singer changed into a pair of bright pajamas and donned a bright cardinal silk robe as he went on to explain the trend of music cross-country.

I made it known to him that although there was a re-birth of the blues taking place that swing too came in for its share of plaudits.

"I agree with you, old man," Bill smiled and with that I took his calling me 'old man' as mere jest (sensitive, these reporters); and accepting a mild Havana cigar listened intentively, "a rhythm-bound group is alright it is true. All choral groups blend with the sweet and hot. That's why you hear the critics rave that the so-and-so boys are 'solid on the sweet side' when writing their reviews. But the Ink Spots, we prefer to be sweet on the solid side—and ballads does it."

The telephone rang somewhere outside the dressing room and I could hear it above the laughter of the crowd of carefree diversion seekers who had jam-packed the Zanzibar. A knock came at the door and almost instantly Coleman, Kenny's valet, sprung the door open.

"Bill Kenny wanted on the phone," a voice uttered.

"Excuse me, Ted," and Kenny left hurriedly. 2-16-46

It wasn't long before I joined the Broadway mob.

"Ballads," I mused to myself, "so that's how America's favorite quartet hits high with popular melodies."

66c. 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers (Louis Jordan)

The Amazing Mr. Jordan

HE PROVED THAT SMALL BANDS COULD DO BIG BUSINESS; RECORDS PUSHING CROSBY

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.
Sat. 7-20-46

Louis Jordan and Bing Crosby recording "Your Socks Don't Match" and "My Baby Said Yes" for Decca Records. Sales for Jordan's disks are second only to Bing.

Perhaps the most amazing man in show business today is Louis Jordan who, with his Tympany Five, bridged the gap between cocktail lounges and the huge stages of the biggest theatres, night clubs and auditoriums in the country within the space of only a few years.

Not only is he a skilled musician but also a stage, screen and radio personality; comedian; top recording artist; and famed song writer.

Jordan is looked upon by the trade as being primarily responsible for the small unit business becoming one of the most lucrative in the entertainment world.

Demanded Featured Booking

Not content with playing cocktail lounges, he forced his managers to get him night club bookings as featured attraction, not as relief band to which small combinations had been relegated, and theatre engagements.

People in the "know" asserted that nothing could be done with a small unit on that large a scale, but Jordan proved otherwise and through him the door to opportunity and stardom was opened for other fine small units.

It was never believed that small units could become best-sellers in the popular record field until Jordan proved the point. Today his records are second only to Bing Crosby in Decca sales and a "must" for successful juke box operation.

Opened Recording Doors

Recording company doors were opened to small combinations because of Jordan and the many companies manufacturing records today are constantly searching for small units with possibilities. It's interesting to note that Jordan doesn't record so-called "No.-1-Plug" tunes but introduces new material and lets them become favorites strictly on their own merit.

Jordan has appeared in Universal, Columbia, Republic and Monogram pictures. However, his film activities haven't made him particularly happy inasmuch as he believes a colored artist can be featured in roles other than servitude or comedy relief.

This feeling is so strong that he has refused many picture offers and risked making his own films. So far only two have been completed: a two-reeler musical, "Caldonia," which introduced the hit song of the same name, and the feature-length "Beware."

To Make Mixed Film

Both of these efforts have all-colored casts (the feminine lead in "Beware" is Valerie Black of the N.Y. company of "Anna Lucasta"). However, plans are being completed for a mixed-cast feature to be filmed in the fall.

In addition to his pioneering, Jordan is a prolific songwriter and discoverer of hits. Among those either written or introduced by him are: "Outskirts of Town," "Knock Me a Kiss," "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby," "Caldonia," "Land of the Buffalo Nickel," "Salt Pork, West Virginia," and "Don't Worry 'Bout That Mule."

Jordan was born in Brinkley, Ark., 38 years ago; plays alto and tenor saxophone and clarinet; received his early musical education from his father who was a music teacher; ran away from home during summer vacations from high school to work in a traveling minstrel show;

First Break With Webb

Is a graduate of Arkansas Baptist College; made his big-time debut as musician-vocalist with the late Chick Webb's orchestra; achieved his first recognition through being featured with that organization. After Webb's death he organized his Tympany Five that was "at liberty" more than it was on the band stand.

He was on the verge of disbanding the outfit when offered a contract to appear in a Chicago cocktail lounge. Being completely discouraged with unfilled promises, he tossed a coin to see whether or not to accept. He won the job and he's continued up the ladder to stardom ever since.

AND STILL THEY COME—Honors on top of honors have been bestowed upon the King Cole Trio. Here King receives the "Esky" for best little band and piano honors while Oscar Moore rates as the top guitarist in the Esquire magazine poll. Actor Orson Welles, left, also received an award. Leonard Feather of Esquire, made the presentations. Duke Ellington, another winner, is in the background.

King Cole Trio Makes Trouble

5-22-46

Kansas City, Mo.

Headwaiter Quits In Protest When Crowd Passes By

The Call-Tri.

HOLLYWOOD.— The headwaiter of the main room of the famous Trocadero resigned last week. He resigned in protest because of lack of business in the main ballroom. Folk coming to the swank Trocadero brushed off this waitary's offer to seat them and made a bee-line to the crowded King Cole Room (the former Cub room of the Troc, renamed in honor of the King Cole Trio) to hear Nat, Oscar and Johnny peddle their musical melodies. The main dining room was left practically empty night after night.

3-22-46

The management of the Troc is trying a remedy. They're featuring the trio in the main dining room for three shows a night besides their small-room chores. And for this double duty the Trio is getting the most fantastic guarantee in the history of show business.

They are raking in 80 per cent of the net profit of the King Cole Room . . . and Old King Cole is a merry old soul these days.

Intimate Glimpse of Mrs. 'King' Cole Shows Winning Personality

The Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 10-5-46

By LIBBY CLARK

LOS ANGELES — Deeply engrossed with adding homely details to their newly purchased "Dream House" in the West Side's swank Blueberry Hill District, Nadine Cole, wife of the famous tunemaster Nat (King) Cole, quietly persues her household chores while her husband continues to thrill fans on radio, stage and screen.

Interviewed on Wednesday of last week, Mrs. Cole told the writer, recent operation prevented her from traveling with her world-famous husband.

UNDECIDED WHERE TO LIVE

For eleven years, Mrs. Cole stated, she and her husband were undecided whether they would make their home in Chicago, New York or Los Angeles. They finally decided on the latter, because of the weather, the casual California mode of living and the warm hospitality of its residents.

A regular little home-body, Nadine is an ardent radio fan and spends most of her evenings listening to mystery and drama stories with her mother Mrs. Emma Robinson of Chicago, who came to Los Angeles to care for her daughter while she was recuperating.

She attends very few social affairs but takes an active part by lending her assistance and financial support to worthwhile civic and community activities

Possessing a rich educational background and natural dramatic ability, Mrs. Cole at present is toying with the idea of joining the Ben Bard Players in Hollywood.

She plays a good game of badminton, loves horseback riding, enjoys sports of all types, and cherishes her wire-haired terrier, appropriately named "Trio."

LAVISHLY FURNISHED HOME

The lavishly furnished Cole resident follows the California motif to the minutest detail. Fond of modern furnishings and color designs, Mrs. Cole's excellent taste and artistic ability is very much in evidence in both house and gardens.

A modest person but brilliant conversationalist, Nadine is up on present day happenings and can talk at length, intelligently on topics from politics to music, which naturally, is a favorite subject with her.

Involved in a restrictive covenant suit scheduled for hearing in Superior Court early in November, Mrs. Cole will be unable to be on hand when her famous husband goes into New York's Paramount theatre on Oct. 15.

NADINE AND "TRIO"—Mrs. Nat "King" Cole, wife of the celebrated star of music world, holds "Trio," the wire haired terrier which keeps her company when King Cole is on the road.—Clyde Woods photo.

King Cole Puts Out Second Album

8-10-46
The Informer

NEW YORK CITY.—(CNS)—The first album of the King Cole Trio did so well that Capitol Records decided to put another on the market. The second includes a selection of the boys' best works: "What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry," "This Way Out," "I Don't Know Why" and "I Know That You Know," "To a Wild Rose" and "I'm in the Mood for Love," "Look What You've Done to Me" and I'm Thru with Love."

Houston, Texas

Comments on the release rate highly. One reported says, "The second King Cole album has received greater response than his first" and "Cole's piano wizardly is highlighted frequently as he takes the vocals on five sides."

The King Needs His Father

The Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

NAT COLE LISTENS TO SERMON—AND SETS IT TO MUSIC

Sat. 11-16-46

NEW YORK—A sermon, as any minister will tell you, should be listened to, not slept through. And though he isn't a minister, Nat Cole will tell you the same thing—and he'll be quite determined about it.

Because Nat (King) Cole, piano-playing vocalist of the King Cole Trio, has learned from his own experience that a sermon, when properly listened to, can bring to the listener a great deal of happiness and success.

Sang in Choir

When a boy, he sang in the choir and played the organ in his father's church in Chicago. The elder Cole, a Baptist minister, had preached many sermons, but it was one serman in particular that Nat remembered.

He remembered it for a long time. Years after he had left Chicago and was touring the country with the then little-known King Cole Trio, Nat recalled this particular sermon.

Tough Times

The giong was tough in those days—playing one-night stands in small towns, making occasional recordings for small companies. Few people had ever heard of the King Cole Trio, and it looked as if not many people ever would.

But then Nat happened to remember his father's sermon. It was an allegorical tale of a buzzard who picked up a monkey. As the bird carried the small simian creature off to its nest in a craggy mountain, the monkey admonished the buzzard to straighten up and fly right.

Sold 2,000,000 Copies

The rest, as they say, is history. Nat wrote a song around that sermon. He titled it "Straighten Up and Fly Right." The Trio recorded it, and before long the record had sold almost 2,000,000 copies.

The Trio, consisting of Nat, Oscar Moore and Johnny Miller, have been on top of the game ever since. And, as Nat Cole points out, the moral of this little story is: "Never fall asleep in church."

Lunceford Buys Into Airline

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. Sat 2-23-46

NEW YORK — Maestro Jimmie Lunceford has added to his rapidly expanding business interests by purchasing a large block of stock in a new coast-to-coast airline which has been organized by a group of former Army Air Forces pilots, maintenance technicians and other ground crewmen.

Jimmie is at present attempting to interest his fellow bandleaders in the idea of using the new airline to transport their bands on cross-country road tours. It goes without saying that his own band will be the new outfit's first big customer, and the ace rhythm-master expects to take to the air for his one-niters and other dance dates by early Spring.

Already the owner of two apartment buildings in an eastern city, Lunceford plans to secure his financial future by investing in as many sound business ventures as he possibly can. The veteran baton-wielder is presently in the process of setting up his own music publishing company, and is rumored to be talking business with a new recording firm which is about to be started on the west coast.

Lunceford Crew In Top Form Again

Black Tempo Philadelphia, Pa.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—Jimmie Lunceford, sporting a revamped and revitalized crew, is making his first theatre date in the Quaker City in several years, Jimmie and his lads tee off Friday, Jan. 25 on the stage of the Earle theater for a week's engagement.

The famed "Lunceford Express" has been roaring to new musical heights in recent months in a sensational comeback that is the talk of the music world. 1-24-46

The turning point in Jimmie's career occurred early in the fall when he went under the guidance of Billy Shaw of the William Morris Agency, gave his band a thorough shaking-up, and put forth a Decca record of "The Honey Dripper," which has skyrocketed to the second ranking disc hit in the nation, and practically tripled the box office potency of the Lunceford crew.

Mismanagement and poor bookings handicapped Jimmie and kept him out of the limelight for the past couple of years, but his new deal has put him back at the top, and finds him in line for some of the coveted musical assignments of the year. 2-2-46

Sparking the crew are such musical "greats" as tenor saxist Joe Thomas, one of the dynamic stars on that instrument, and veteran baritone reeder Earl Carruthers.

In his appearance on the Earle stage, Jimmie presents his new singing star, vivacious Marlyn Kilroy, who shares vocal honors with baritone Nick Brooks and the popular Lunceford quartet.

My Word, Lunceford Has Become A 'Bird'

Chicago Defender 5-4-46

NEW YORK—Jimmie Lunceford and his orchestra will take the wild blue yonder in traveling the length of the country on a three-week tour from New York to California, which gets underway May 1 and winds up May 21, when the band takes to the stage of the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles.

Long recognized as the foremost advocate of air travel for touring dance bands, Jimmie has chartered a converted C-47 Army aircraft in which to make his cross country jaunt. The Lunceford band will take off from New York on May 1 and play engagements in Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, South Bend, Kansas City, Topeka, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Denver, and Salt Lake City en route to California.

The Lunceford flight will be the first of its kind. Other bands have made flights of great distance in the past, but none have ever made an entire cross-country tour by air.

Saturday

Lunceford Melts Afro-American Notre Dame Ice

Baltimore, Md.

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—Long recognized as one of the foremost dance favorites of America's collegians, Jimmie Lunceford will add to his many triumphs of the past when he becomes the first non-white bandleader ever to play a prom at Notre Dame University on May 3. 4-27-46

The prom is the biggest annual functions it this renowned mid-western seat of learning, and the honor of playing it in past years has gone to such bands as Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Vaughn Monroe, Artie Shaw, Sammy Kaye and Guy Lombardo. Sat.

Believes Strings, 'Winds Ineffective for Road Work

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 9-21-46

"Harlem Express" Maestro Denies He Will Return to Oxley, Former Manager

By E. B. REA

BALTIMORE—If there is a growing trend among the nation's major bands to swing from swing to sweet, you can count Jimmie Lunceford out. That is for the present at least. Jimmie is not going to reduce his brass sections for strings and woodwinds effect, but will swing along with his full toned, modern-styled band which he says has all the trimmings.

Lunceford

Lunceford gave his reason during an interview backstage at the Royal Theatre where he is currently playing a week's engagement, prior to heading in the Deep outh.

Not Good for Road

"First," says Jimmie, "strings and woodwinds are all right for straight concert and theatrical work, but with my band doing mostly road work, I'll have no need for string effect.

"Then," he said, "another reason is, I have a bunch of good musicians capable of bringing out tempered melody with the brasses that can satisfy the public."

The maestro, billed as the "Harlem Express," revealed that in spite of his large brass section, he has never exploited the brasses. And, it is noticeable that this section is usually muted for shade and effect.

O.K. For Night Clubs

"Strings are fine for night clubs and some theatres," he said, "but when it comes to the public dance audiences, the type of music young people like, such effects would be lost, and until the public become educated to it, it would be a losing gesture."

For variety in his band, he is offering the glee club and a quartet. This was inspired, he said, because he has been playing a number of college proms throughout the New England States and wanted to bring in something different in between band numbers.

Jimmie also sevealed that his most outstanding record is "Blues in the Night." He received the tag, "Harlem Express," from his first hit record for Decca by the same name, and the "Rhythm Is Our Business" billing from a Broadway show in 1935 when he was booked in for five weeks and stayed 23.

Wilcox Arranger

Edwin Wilcox, one of the original members of the band, does most of the arrangements featured by the aggregation.

Following the present road tour he will return to New York for another recording session. The tunes will be those best received by the audiences wherever he plays.

He is currently booked by William Morris, and denied several published reports that he would return under the management of Harold Oxley with whom he was associated for 12 years.

Doesn't Criticize Others

He doesn't criticize other band leaders for cancelling engagements in the South, but says he has never had any trouble down there and that he believes that one of the ways to help eliminate such state of affairs is to continue to hammer away with plenty of good will. "You can't help relieve a situation," he says, "unless you are in it."

When asked if he thought cooperation between the bookies and musicians' unions could break down the "white only" band policy of some of the key spots, he answered:

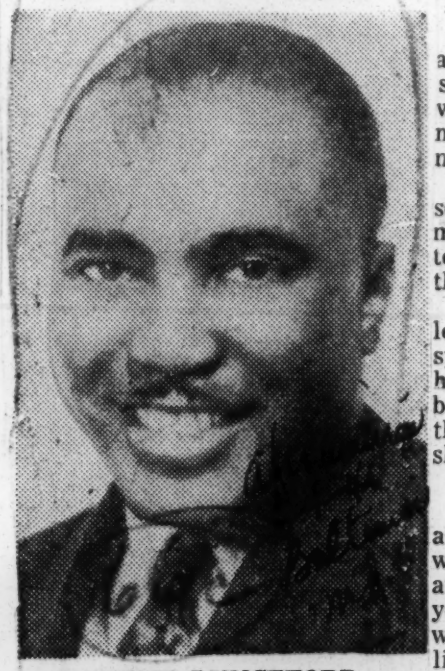
"I don't think so. It's purely an economic situation, and some owners of these spots have something in them that won't come out. Some of them would rather 'freeze' than open up to our bands."

Featuring Pop Tunes

The band is currently a pop tune, "Gug-Mug"; "Him Who Has —Gets," a potential hit, and "J.G." The latter title from the initials of its composers, Joe Thomas and George Divivid.

Merlyn Kilroy, female vocalist, comes on with "Sun in the Morning' 'and "I'll Buy That Dream" with the Lunceford quartet. Nick Brooks, male vocalist; Bunny Briggs, tapster; Jimmie Jimae, magician, and Stump and Stumpy, comedy dance team, round out the show.

He's 44 This Week



JIMMIE LUNCEFORD,

who was born James Melvin Lunceford on June 6, 1902 at Fulton, Miss., observes his 44th birthday on Thursday. He has been fronting his own band since 1927

Lunceford has racked up a new record this year in playing more college proms than any other band. His orchestra already has played for collegiate dancers at Cornell, Purdue, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Clemson, Kansas State University, and the University, of Texas, among other schools

Lunceford Turns 44

The Courier Pittsburgh, Pa. Sat. 6-15-46

EUREKA, Calif.—Jimmie Lunceford, the famed "Harlem Express," was feted on the occasion of his forty-fourth birthday, June 6, during a one-night dance date he played here on his curent Pacific Coast tour.

The veteran maestro was given a surprise party, arranged by his manager, Eddie Rosenberg, which found the entire audience at the dance as well as the Lunceford

Cross Country Flight Near Record Time

Jimmie's Crew

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md. Sat. 9-17-46

NEW YORK—Jimmie Lunceford did in flying his own plane cross-country from Los Angeles to New York in near record time.

During his recent sojourn in California, Jimmie purchased a new Sessna twin-engine aircraft, which he plans to fly himself on

all future road tours. When it came time to return East, he, accompanied by six of his bandsmen, flew home in 12 hours and 35 minutes, which is near record time for a plane of this type.

Jimmie, recently qualified as a senior pilot, was at the controls all the way, while Edwin Wilcox, pianist and arranger with the band, who also holds a pilots license, was in the co-pilot's seat.

Lunceford now owns three planes which he keeps at a private airport near his Westchester County, N.Y., home. In addition to his new Sessna, in which he can carry seven passengers, he has a pair of Piper Cubs for pleasure jaunts.

He is presently waiting for word from the War Department on his application to purchase a surplus Army C-47 "Sky Train" aircraft for use in flying his entire band on road tours.

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers, Etc. Mlle. MOUNE Rivel

Meet Mlle. Moune Rivel

First French Negro Girl to Sing in U. S. Now at Cafe Society

By NORA HOLT

The first impression we had of Mlle. Moune Rivel, the young French chanteuse, whom Barney Josephson is grooming for stardom at Cafe Society Uptown, was favorable.

One remark revealed the courage, fighting spirit, and loyalty of this young woman who fought as a member of the Resistance movement against the Germans for the freedom of her beloved France.

We were properly introduced and sat at one of the side tables in the cafe. I spoke in short-phrased French: "Alor, Madame, pardon—Mademoiselle," I corrected. "Combien de temps vous reste ici? Je ne sais quoi" she replied. That broke the ice and we kept the conversation going smoothly, in both French and English. -26-46

Tells Impressions Of New York

The subject variously led to details of her arrival, the rough Atlantic crossing in an old French liner, first impressions of New York, and how long she planned to remain.

Gaily we assured her she would like New York, the greatest city in the world with its skyscrapers, parks and the breath-taking beauty of myriad lights flashing like fireflys in the haze of a cold January night. "You will love it," we repeated.

Her body became taut and her eyes flashed as she answered in clearly enunciated French, "Paris is also beautiful, and the greatest city in the world." The serious expression of her face lasted but a moment, and she countered by saying how friendly everyone was. How amiable and solicitous were those she had met.

She'll Meet the Test

Moune will succeed in this new country for she is fearless, and the massiveness, grandeur, and immensity of her surroundings will be met with the same resoluteness of purpose that fortified her for the ordeals of war.

She is the find of GI Corporal Paul Sklar who was so impressed with her unusual talents when he heard her perform in a Parisien night club, he wrote Josephson about her and the follow-up has progressed on a par with the uncanny intuitive sense of one of New York's greatest impressarios.

The history of Moune (pronounced Moon) is exotic enough to command the admiration of sated New Yorkers who are ever on the alert for the unusual. Of Gaudaloupan descent, she is the great-granddaughter of Count de Rivel, a born Royalist Frenchman who rebelled against the ideals of his family and exiled himself from his home to settle in Gaudaloupe where he married a native girl.

Taught Piano By Mother

For generations his desecndants have been the leading musicians of that country. She was taught to play the piano by her mother, a finished musician, and can sing, dance and play the guitar. Her repertoire includes many West Indian folksongs written by her mother and grandmother. She also sings in English, French, Spanish, Polish and Russian. 1-26-46

Miss Rivel will have the distinction of being the first French Negro to make a public appearance in the United States. She was a personality of stellar proportions in Paris as a performer on Radiodiffusion Francaise, the French broadcasting system, where she was on the same program with Jo Baker.

Her American debut was scheduled for Monday, Jan. 21, at Cafe Society Uptown with an all-star show featuring Susan Reed, 19-year-old folk singer; Imogene Coca, New York's favorite pixie; Mary Lou Williams, dynamic boogie-woogie pianist, and Larry Winters, concert baritone. Sunday evening she was a guest on "We the People" radio show over CBS. Moune had many well-wishers in her corner for her debut, for Americans have never forgotten the friendliness and loyalty of the French people, and we welcome her with the traditional, "A Votre Sante."

MOUNE RIVEL: A bundle of French dynamite who invades New York City under the patronage of Barney Josephson and who opened at Cafe Society Uptown Monday. When asked if she likes America, she replied in broken English, "She excite me very much. Voyez a su' nous". That's the Creole equivalent of the jive exclamation, "Send me, Jackson."

French Singer Says White American GI's Tried to Scare Her with Jim Crow Bugaboo

1-26-46

(Exclusive to The AFRO)

NEW YORK — "In France, all people are the same, no matter whether their color is red, black, white, purple or pink," said Moune (pronounced Moon) de Virel, beautimul and exotic French singer who recently arrived in America, in her first exclusive interview.

She revealed to the AFRO that many White American GI's in her Paris that she would unhappy in color discrimination me I would be so sad if here, but I decided to come any way."

Moune is now on touring the South, although Cafe Society to whom she is under contract, objects to it strenuously.

Says She's Different

"Me, I am different," she continued, in a broken English which the AFRO reporter was hard to understand. "Most French people like to stay in their own country. Me, how you say it? I want to voyage!"

She is the first cultural representative to come here from France since the war. The reason is because Guadaloupe, her country, was one of the first Free French outposts, and she is here upon permission of the immigration authorities as a representative of her country. The Guadaloupians are very happy about her coming to America.

Moune arrived aboard the French Liner Le Groix, Dec. 21, at Cafe Society Uptown, where she opened Monday night, will be featured at the piano singing Guadaloupian folk songs, her specialty. She will also do French and English numbers.

Tells of Black Market

"In Paris, you have to wear shoes because of the mud," she explained, "and the high prices . . . well, you know the black market." She now wears shoes that she bought for $150. American-made shoes like much better.

"I am so very happy to be here. New York is wonderful. In New York, we have no clothes. New York has so many lights . . . it looks like a fairy-land, n'est-ce-pas? The American boys are so big and strong, and have such wide shoulders. They are so well-fed . . . not like the GI's were crazy about my songs in France. I hope they like them as much here, too. American songs can be sung by anyone, but My Guadaloupian songs will be something new to this country."

Discovered by GI

Cpl. Sklar gave her her first lessons in English and she is learning fast. Only the other night, she was escorted to a restaurant in Chinatown, and when the Chinese waiter came over and asked her what she wanted to order, she being a former Cafe Society fan, her father is an attorney and holds to come to an important government post in Guadaloupe. She has two brothers in the French Army, one a lieutenant, captain and the other a lieutenant. Her sister, Tony, is married and has five children.

Moune attended the Institut Maintenon, one of the best private schools in Paris.

Singing Eight Years

She has been singing in Parisian nite clubs for eight years, except during the German occupation when she attended dramatic school. During the occupation by the "Boche," she risked her life on many occasions doing underground work.

She hid many French Senegalese troops and Jewish refugees in her home, and helped them escape to fredom. She used to visit prisoners in jails and leave her name and address with them. When they escaped, they all came to her house. "They adopted me as their godmother."

She is glad the French liberated Paris themselves, "because we wanted to throw out the Boche who made us suffer so much."

Protege of Mme. Eboue

Moune is a protege of Mme. Eboue who came to hear her sing in Paris. "Mme. Eboue liked my singing very much because I specialized in Guadaloupian folk songs. She also comes from my country, Guadaloupe."

Moune is happy French women were finally accorded the right to vote in recent elections. She also voted for the first time, too.

The first American tune she picked up here was "Moon Over Miami," which she hums beautifully. — Dier.

1-24-46

Well-Known Family

She was born in Bordeaux, France. She is 25 and was born in Barrymores here. Weighing 125, she is 5 feet 4 inches tall and full of vim and vitality. In every way, she is typically French. She is single.

Her mother is a teacher of music and a composer in Paris, and her father is an attorney and holds

This is lovely Moune (pronounced moon) de Virel, talented French Negro star of Cafe Society Uptown. Discovered by Corp. Paul Sklar in a Paris music-hall, she was brought to this country by Barney Josephson of Cafe Society on the strength of photographs and recordings which were sent to him. Moune sings, dances, plays the piano and guitar. She sings in English, French, Spanish, Polish and Russian. She is 5 feet 4 inches tall, weighs 125 pounds and was born in Bordeaux, France, 25 years ago. Of Guadalupan descent, Moune is the great granddaughter of the French Count de Virel. The Count rebelled against his family's Royalist ideas and exiled himself from France to Guadaloupe where he married a native Negro girl. Count de Virel was very musical and since then for generations his descendants have been the leading musicians of Guadaloupe. Many of the West Indian songs in Moune's repertoire were written by her mother and grandmother.

Daily Worker

2-14-46

N.Y.P.M.

This is lovely Moune (pronounced moon) de Virel, talented French Negro star of Cafe Society Uptown. Discovered by an American GI in a Paris music-hall, she was brought to this country by Barney Josephson of Cafe Society on the strength of recordings of her voice which were sent to him. Moune sings, dances, plays the piano and guitar. She sings in English, French, Spanish, Polish and Russian. She is 5 feet 4 inches tall, weighs 125 pounds and was born in Bordeaux, France, 25 years ago. Of Guadalupan descent, Moune is the great granddaughter of the French Count de Virel. The Count rebelled against his family's Royalist ideas and exiled himself from France to Guadaloupe where he married a native Negro girl. Count de Virel was very musical and since then for generations his descendants have been the leading musicians of Guadaloupe. Many of the West Indian songs in Moune's repertoire were written by her mother and grandmother. 2-14-46

French Star Wed to Baltimorean

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

Sat. 8-10-46 MISS MOUNE De VIREL, who has highlighted entertainment bills at Cafe Society Uptown since her arrival from France several months ago, became the bride of Ellis Lane Larkins, former Baltimore piano child prodigy, at St. James PE Church, Baltimore, on Wednesday. Mr. Larkins has also made good at Cafe Society since he went to New York to continue his study of music. Ellis Larkins Trio, and composed several jazz studies and interpretations.

Mr. and Mrs. Larkins poured cocktails for their friends. Later Mrs. Martha Thomas, a long-time friend of Mrs. Larkins poured cocktails for the couple, who returned to New York Thursday morning.

The bride, who hails from Guadaloupe, was the first French entertainer to arrive in the States after the close of the war.

She was recently featured in Life Magazine, and made a preview appearance on the "We the People" radio show. Moune is the granddaughter of the French Count de Virel who rebelled against his family's Royalist ideas, and exiled himself from France to Guadaloupe where he married a native colored girl.

Her mother is a teacher of music and a composer in Paris, while her father is an attorney who holds an important Government post in Guadaloupe.

Ellis, after being recognized for his exceptional musical talent in Baltimore, studied at the Juillard School of Music in New York upon his graduation from Douglass High School.

He skyrocketed to fame at Cafe Society where he organized his own musical aggregation, the

Cafe Society Star Weds Former Baltimore Pianist

The Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

Sat. 8-10-46

with Lula Jones Garrett

Moune De Virel, the French star, who has been creating such a ferver at Cafe Society Uptown in New York City, came quietly into Baltimore, last Monday with her prospective bridegroom, Ellis Lane Larkins, to be married at St. James PE Church, where the former Baltimore child piano prodigy had been baptised, had been given his first boost to a musical career, and where his mother is still a prominent member.

In direct contrast to the glamour which surrounds her in New York, Miss De Virel was almost as chastely attired as a nun for her wedding. She wore a gray gabadine taileur with white blouse, modest black sandals with matching gloves and bag and twisted a multi-colored scarf into a turban as a headdress.

The ceremony was witnessed by members of his family and a few

fredi says..

By FREDI WASHINGTON
PV's Theatrical Editor

ON WE, THE PEOPLE last Sunday night and *Jack Smith's* program Wednesday night, seven-year-old Frankie (Sugar Chile) Robinson asked *Caledonia* in no uncertain terms, *What Makes your big head* so hard while he beat out his own accompaniment on the piano using fingers, fist, elbow and forearm to get the desired effects. If you think "Sugar Chile's" boogie-woogie is beat or weak, or that his speech is that of a timid, ungroomed child, then get set for a more pleasant surprise. For this youngster has poise, a quick, agile mind, a manner of speech which indicates an on-a-par without being disrespectful attitude, and his diction is good and he has excellent vocal projection.

Early stories that were circulated about this tiny boy wonder, gave you the feeling that the poverty of his home would automatically produce an undernourished child both physically and mentally. Coming of a family of many children, "Sugar Chile" was said to have sung on the street corners and played the piano in any spot he happened to wander. If this is true, (and we have no way of knowing. Some publicist says his home is in Chicago others say it is Detroit) then "Sugar Chile" can certainly be likened to such people as the late Governor Al Smith, Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson and many others who arose from the ranks of the streets of the tenement sections of New York's lower East Side.

People's Voice, N.Y. N.Y.

"Sugar Chile", has just returned from Hollywood where he made a picture for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer where he is signed for a long term contract. He is currently appearing at the Regal Theatre in Chicago.

3-16-46

These are all pretty wonderful things to have happen to your youngster at the tender age of five and certainly, the lad swells your chest with pride when you listen to his intelligent manner of speech which falls from his lips as naturally as water rippling over stones in a brook, and yet, you must wonder what the future with its cobweb of complexities, holds for this child.

"Sugar Chile"

Of course we know the law requires that all children must have a permit to work professionally, but they must be given a schooling commensurate with a public school education either in a professional school or by private tutors. They must also be under the constant supervision of a guardian. These are requirements of the law and by virtue of this law, many abuses of professional children are a thing of the past. But it is not the minimum needs we are so much concerned with at this point. Rather, we are attempting to delve into the ability of "Sugar Chile's" parents, managers and the long list of folks who are responsible for the boy and his career, to handle the child's normal growth.

3-16-46

It is not an easy matter to cope with the many complex problems that come with having the spotlight suddenly turned on you or yours. Particularly is this true when you have spent half your life scuffling to get the mere necessities. In such cases and among us, this is certainly the rule rather than the exception. There has not been time nor have we had the finance to avail ourselves of the knowledge it takes to play the behind-the-scenes game, both commercial and psychological.

One of the saddest cases concerning a child star is that of Jackie Coogan. More than a million dollars Jackie earned as a child. Today he is broke and can't get a break. He had the great misfortune to have the kind of parents who, by their mishandling of him as a human being, and the money he earned, made of him a misfit for the rest of his life. He, no doubt, never had a normal, healthy outlet as a child. At a tender age he became the breadwinner of his household.

Little English, Freddie Bartholomew made a brilliant start as a child actor under the careful and understanding guidance of an aunt. But the more successful Freddie became on the screen, the more a jealous, discontented wave of family disputes enveloped him. Parents who had been content to leave his welfare and incidentally his expenses to his aunt, suddenly found them*selves to be parents of a highly talented and successful child actor.*

The court battles for possession of his earnings wrecked his chances for a normal life and robbed him of a career in pictures. Today, you never hear the name Freddie Bartholomew. He is a very young man and had he had just half a chance to be a child doing all of the things other normal children do, it is probable he would be approaching his career now fully equipped to charter his own course with some degree of lasting success.

These are sad cases, for both these boys were robbed of their right to be children in the same sense that other kids are allowed to be children—developing stage by stage as the laws of nature intended.

"Sugar Child" is going to have a tough time thinking, acting and developing like boys of his age and it will be wise parents who will learn fast the rules of the shrewd game their child has now become a part of. To allow this child to learn of his importance and become saturated in the publicity—some good, some phony—will only mean a mal-adjusted child with talent.

He has talent, he is intelligent and he has great promise but for him to develop properly, he must not be saddled with or be conscious of, a fame which is hard even for adults to take in stride. *With fame comes a grave responsibility. Let us hope that Frankie's parents understand this in every sense of the word.*

Sugar Chile down with pneumonia;

DETROIT—Just returned from Hollywood where he went to make a picture for MGM, Frank (Sugar Chile) Robinson is ill at Children's hospital here of pneumonia. Attending physicians report the child boogie woogie pianist, whose playing at the age of 7 has brought him nationwide fame, is much improved.

Sugar With a Boogie Beat

4-1-46 – Mon.

He was named Frankie Isaac Robinson, but his mammy called him Sugar Chile. A precocious infant with a wide, friendly grin, he hummed tunes six months after he was born. Propped up on a piano bench at 1½, Sugar Chile banged out his first tune—"Tuxedo Junction" with a boogie beat. Before he was 5 he made his first professional stage appearance with Louis Prima at the Downtown Theater in Detroit, his home town. For this, he was paid $10.

Newsweek

When Sugar Chile was 6, he played three days with Lionel Hampton at the Paradise Theater in Detroit. For this: $5. Shortly after, in September 1945, he appeared for a week with Frankie Carle at the Michigan Theater. Although this engagement netted him a $100 War Bond, Sugar Chile hit the jackpot in publicity. No photographer could resist the tiny Negro at the big piano. When his fingers failed to find the keys he wanted, he sailed in with his fists and elbows.

Last October, as was inevitable, Sugar Chile went to Hollywood. In "No Love, No Leave," starring Van Johnson, he both played and talked. The ante had now risen to $250 a week, plus expenses for his sister Dorothy and his cousin Agnes. On March 2 at the White House Correspondents' dinner in Washington, Sugar Chile, now 7, performed for the President, making his famous aside: "How'm Ah doin', Mr. President?"

New York

During the week of March 11, Sugar Chile played the Regal Theater in South-side Chicago. For grossing $36,000 and thus beating Duke Ellington's previous house record, he got $11,000. Because the Music Corp. of America, his agent, wants to build him slowly and safeguard his health, he won't have another theater date until April 4 in Newark.

As far as anyone can tell, success has spoiled neither Sugar Chile nor his family. They still live in the same Detroit factory-district house. Sugar Chile's mother is dead, but his sister Dorothy, 18, looks after him. His father, who runs his own small coal and ice business, is working his same route. Sugar Chile's money—more than half of a $20,000 gross—is going into a trust fund. As a matter of fact, the family won't even buy their prodigy a new piano. He is still too small to reach the pedals and so beats time by kicking the front of the old living-room upright.

About the future, Sugar Chile has this to say: "Ah wants to have ma own band but not until Ah'm about 21. Until then, Ah wants to be out in front by myself, gettin' that ole buildup."

Monday 4-1-46

'Sugar Chile' Makes Stage Appearances After Protest

Afro-American, Baltimore, Md.

CHICAGO — Buddy Johnson, young bandleader, proved once again that he is a most resourceful chap when he successfully presented the first stage appearance of Frank (Sugar Chile) Robinson, sensational seven-year-old boogie-woogie virtuoso, last Friday in his show at the Regal Theater here after it looked for a while as though "Sugar Chile" would be restrained from fulfilling the engagement.

Sat.

Buddy had no sooner booked little Frankie to appear with him at the Regal than juvenile welfare authorities learned of the matter and took steps to prevent the youngster from playing the theater.

The place for "Sugar Chile," declared authorities both in his home town of Detroit and in Chicago, was in a schoolroom behind his books and not on a theater stage behind a keyboard.

Ella Saves the Day

Just when things looked utterly hopeless, Johnson got a bright idea. He recalled that his sister Ella had taught school in South Carolina before she took up blues-singing with his band, so why couldn't Ella tutor "Sugar Chile" between shows.

3-16-46

Joe Hess Buddy's road manager, promptly contacted proper authorities and proposed the plan. After investigation of Ella's former status as a schoolmarm, they rescinded the ban on the youngster's stage appearance on condition that Ella would give him five hours of coaching on his lessons each day and present a bona fide report on his progress.

Not to be outdone by his sister, Johnson began rounding out Frankie's education by giving him a complete course in the intricate patterns of his "Walk 'Em Rhythm" creation.

and "Sugar Chile" went through his paces like a trouper, piping out as he played "Caldonia": "How'm I doin', Mr. President."

"HOW'M I DOIN' "

3-16-46

"Sugar Chile" performed at the White House recently. When the piano was being pushed out on the stage, one of the legs broke under it. A hotel attendant held the leg in place

"Sugarchile" Stops Show Cold With Song From His First Film

Afro-American, Baltimore, Md.

2-2-46

DETROIT—Detroit-born Frankie (Sugarchile) Robinson, six-year-old boogie piano prodigy, recently discovered by Lionel Hampton, came back home after finishing a movie in Hollywood and opened a personal appearance at the Downtown Theatre here with Bobby Sherwood's orchestra.

A Variety mag. critic who caught the show, said of "Sugarchile:" "With all the aplomb of a long-time mimic, he tickles the keys for laughs as well as for music. What keys he can't finger for reasons of physical limitations, he slaps with his fist or elbow and never misses a note.

"Best number is 'Caldonia' which he sings in an off-key husky pitch. He stops the show cold on "No Leave, No Love," the song he sings in his unreleased Van oJhnson picture, his first screen assignment."

ON "WE, THE PEOPLE"

LOS ANGELES—Honey Child Robinson, age 6, world's youngest boogie woogie pianist, is coming from Hollywood to New York to appear on We the People, radio program, Sunday, Feb. 10.

European

Sugar Chile uses fingers, fist, or elbow

Sugar Chile Robinson stomps for his supper

PM 3-17-46

SUGAR CHILE ROBINSON, the seven-year-old Detroiter who recently played the piano for President Truman, is the freshest boogie-woogie player we have ever met. He is also the gabbiest, the tiniest, the cutest and the youngest.

We met him in Studio 3 at CBS where he was rehearsing with an orchestra for his part in the Jack Smith show on March 6. His little face seemed almost the color of ripe plums above his white Buster Brown collar. He wore a snappy black and white checked coat, black shorts and shiny black patent leather shoes. He told us his real name was Frankie I. Robinson.

What did the I stand for?

"For my middle name, Isaac. I never tell much people what my middle name is because I think it sounds funny, like my lawyer's name. Mr. Eiges."

Did he go to school? He smiled a wide, toothless grin and shook his head:

"I've went to school, all right. But now I have a tutor. His name's Toomer. Hey! What's these buttons here for?"

He pressed three buttons, and created a mild disturbance in the control booth.

Sugar Chile Robinson taps out the beat as he plays in his back-to-the-piano style.

Fascinated by his own thought

We asked Frankie about the night of March 2 when he played for President Truman at the White House Correspondents' dinner in Washington. He crossed one leg over the other and nodded his head like a little old man.

"I done my whole routine," he said. "I played *Sugar Chile Boogie*—that's one I wrote myself—and *Hamp's Boogie*—that's Lionel Hampton. And *Babaleda* and *Caledonia What Makes Your Big Head So Hard?* I don't know do you spell *Babaleda* with a A or a U?

"Was a lot of big people out there. I didn't know for sure which one was the President. Might be anyone. Might be Hitler . . ."

The thought seemed to fascinate him and he waved a small hand toward the men who were relaxed over their music stands. ". . . Any one of these men in the orchestra might be Hitler. You know - - -" he leaned forward and slapped one shoe importantly, "—Hitler just might have shaved off his mustache." He leered intently at a thin blond violinist with a long nose. Our question brought him back: just what had he said to the President.

They are seven

"I tole him," said Frankie, still gazing thoughtfully at the violinist, "let's see, what did I tell him? I wished him a lot of health. I said I was very honored—I guess I *was* honored. He said, 'Thank you. I liked your music. I think you're a great pianist.'

"And I said, 'I'm very honored to meet you, Mr. President and I wish you a lot of health'."

Who had coached him to say that?

"My Auntie and my sister Dorothy. Say," he whispered as he saw us writing, "Do you have to put that in the paper, *too?*"

We changed the subject. How many other children were there in his family?

"I got four brothers and two sisters. How many does that make? How much is four and five?"

He dropped his voice to a deep, full baritone. 3-17-46

"It makes nine," he went on portentiously, "But we haven't got nine. There are seven of us." He slapped at his shoe and laughed in our face. Jack Smith called to Frankie: "Mr. Robinson, can you try that *Caledonia* again?"

"Sure, sure," he called like an amiable trouper. To us he said politely, "pardon me, ma'am."

The musicians looked up with interest from their music stands when he began to pound the keys, standing up.

"Look," cried one of the men, "he's playing with his elbow and the back of his hand. It comes out right, too."

Frankie hit a clump of notes with his knee, also, and his fat, small hands darted over the keys. He danced the tune out with his feet and the show's director ordered a mike to be set on the floor under the piano to catch his tapping. Everybody seemed very much excited by Frankie's performance. Only his sister, Dorothy, a large, soft-eyed girl of 18 or 19, who travels with him, sat back complacently.

"People always make a fuss about him," she confided lazily to us. "But Frankie seems to be broad-minded about that. He says he won't let anyone spoil him. No one else in the family got any musical talent. We tell him that some children can do other things well. He was talking at six months, and when he was a year-and-a-half he heard someone on the radio play the blues and he walked over to the piano and played, just like that."

Frankie has lots of friends, she told us, and his sisters and brothers are very proud of him. None of the kids is jealous; they all think he is a lot of fun. People are always dropping in to hear him play—there are three pretty battered pianos in the Robinson home; a couple of ancient wrecks are out on the porch getting worse every minute.

Frankie's father is in the coal and ice business in Detroit; his mother died three years ago. She was the only one who was the least bit musical and all she did was play a few chords. There won't be music lessons for Frankie because every musician who hears him play advises against it. We asked Dorothy if the child's IQ had been determined. 3.17.46

Books and funny books

"He's got an IQ," she said. "But they didn't tell us what it is. Frankie reads all the time, books and funny books. He goes to bed at 6:30 or 7. He first played in public two years ago at the downtown theater in Detroit . . . It was amateur night. Louis Prima was on that bill and he heard Frankie in the auditions. He said, 'You're no amateur, boy,' and he put him on his program as a professional.

Since then Frankie has played with other band leaders, and he is appearing in Van Johnson's forthcoming picture, *No Leave, No Love*, as the son of a piano mover who has no piano—so he practices the piano while he rides his Dad's truck.

His lawyer shook a finger at him. "Now, Frankie, you mustn't lie."

Frankie sat down and crossed his legs. He looked hard at Eiges.

"Don't lawyers ever tell a lie?" he demanded, like a district attorney in the movies. "Do they always come early? Do they always tell the truth in court?"

Everybody looked startled, except Dorothy. Frankie was having a wonderful time.

"Heh, heh," he laughed, slapping himself on the thigh, "answer that one. Do lawyers always tell the truth?"

The rehearsal over, Frankie came back to us, stopping for a moment at the drum, as he played a brief phrase with the hook under the collar. Just to kid him, we asked who had tied his tie.

He looked us straight in the eye and replied, "I did." 3-17-46

"Guess I'll be a orchestra leader when I grow up," he said, only without a stick." a look at Frankie's tie: it was one of those they always tell the truth in court?"

His shoes twinkled in a tap dance, and he chanted:

"I'll be as sharp as a tack,

I'll be as hard as a mule . . ."

What was that song, we asked.

6,000 Hear Frankie's Amazing Boogie Woogie in Auditorium

KANSAS CITY. — Frankie "Sugar Chile" Robinson, 7-year-old "hot" piano player actually sold his way into the hearts of more than 6,000 persons who paid $8,258 for the privilege of seeing and hearing the personality-plus whip out amazing eight-to-the-bar riffs in the Municipal auditorium here on Friday night, June 7.

From his first appearance on stage the audience, two-thirds of which was white, seated shoulder to shoulder with Negroes throughout the big hall in friendly neighborliness, was completely won by the boy's intelligent, sparkling personality.

The audience waited patiently through a long series of quartet numbers, guitar solos and a piano solo only to hear the child prodigy dispense his torrid boogie woogie numbers. And undoubtedly there was not a single person who regretted the display of patience necessary to hear the star of the show.

Runs on Stage

"Sugar Chile" ran out on stage, mounted the piano bench—after climbing on a little platform—and immediately plunged into a torrid session of boogie-woogie playing that put the audience in the mood called, "Solid, Jackson, Solid!"

The little entertainer, dressed in a white suit and white shoes, manipulated a rhythmic eight-beat with his left hand, while reaching into the upper register of the piano and beating out his tempo with a now-this-foot-not-that-foot styling that brought roars of applause and cheers from the highest balcony seat to the orchestra front row.

Frankie announced his own numbers with a diction as clear, concise and cultured as a Carnegie hall emcee, waiting appropriately for the ringing applause to subside before attempting to speak.

Bobbing his head in tempo with the rhythm, the little artist made the 'breaks' with his fists and elbows, never hitting a dissonant or "sour" note.

Plays Own Composition

After his first selection, a fast 'solid-sender,' Frankie thanked the audience for the reception and then announced he would play one of his own compositions, "Sugar Chile Boogie."

The reaction of the crowd was manifest in yells and rhythmic foot beats. Count Basie nor Hawkins, nor Calloway nor Sinatra have ever received greater applause than did "Sugar Chile." His musical ideas and patterns were equal to those of many adult boogie woogie players.

But the number that really got a shout was "Caledonia," with Frankie singing the lyrics. He wowed the house as he emphasized the "What-Makes-Your-Big-Head-So-Hard" with his fists beating cadence on the piano.

Next came a terrific "Hey! Ba-Ba-Rebop" that set the audience wild. Folks were simply in the groove with Frankie, there's no denying it. Frankie has won 6,000 friends in Kansas City. Wildly did they cheer as the little fellow ran from the stage.

Later he came back, walked up to the mike and thanked his audience for the reception and said:

'Program Long, I'm Short'

"Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you. The program has been so long and I'm so short; so we'll just have to say good night. I thank you."

Then he ran swiftly across stage to the exit, where his sister, his aunt, his father, and his six-foot, 225-pound tutor, Eugene Toomer, stood waiting to rush him out of the hall. They were none too soon either, for many hundred of the audience rushed for the child with pencils and papers, seeking autographs. Only timely action by his people and four or five policemen prevented Frankie from being surrounded by his admirers.

The show, one of the finest to come to Kansas City, consisted of the Deep River quartet, with pianist Gentry Warden and Charles Johnson, guitarist. It was promoted by Francis M. Spencer, one of the leading local promoters.

In charge of the show was "Sugar Chile's" father, Clarence Robinson, who said his first knowledge of Frankie's ability to play the piano came when the boy was about 18-months-old.

"We had a piano in the house and a radio," said Robinson. "None of my other three sons or two daughters ever touched that piano, all listened to the radio. One day we came home and found Frankie playing some of the tunes he had heard on the radio. He's been playing ever since."

In Pictures a Month

Mr. Robinson said Frankie was contracted to the Music Corporation of America. Frankie worked in pictures for a month, for MGM, said Robinson. He said that the statement in newspapers saying that Frankie did not like California was erroneous. Frankie did like California.

In answer to a query as to why Frankie was not in picture work now, Mr. Robinson said:

"Well, we are doing all right now, for one thing. MGM wanted Frankie to sign a contract to work in pictures for $200 a week, on a graduating salary scale, increasing yearly. I thought the salary too small and would not sign the seven-year contract they offered at that price. And I do not regret it."

Frankie's share of the show here was $5,000. In addition to a $2,000 guarantee he received 60 per cent of the gross after the tax was taken out. Frankie goes to town in more ways than on the piano, it seems.—J.I.J.

Hollywood Stuff And Jive On Sugar Chile

Sugar Chile Robinson, the Eight year-old wonder piano thumper, who evinces all of the characteristics of a child prodigy, established a record attendance at the Lincoln theatre, the Sepia end of the new Orpheum theatre policy recently inaugurated for reasons we will explain later, during the last closing week.

His attendance topped the Ink Spots and Cleanhead Vinson's orch. But, men, this pillar is not sure at all, that this small lad with so much artistic promise is being properly groomed for a long range career. We are not out to throw cold water on the lad or his backers, but find it difficult to believe, that numbers like E Bob A ReBop and Caldonia, carry the music or possess the lyrics appropriate for a child so small.

We must remember, that a child of eight, regardless how precocious, is still in its formative years. What it learns now, will mark it throughout life. Lets look to real development of talent, rather than exploitment of the moment. Sure, Sugar Chile is making money. But, So What! ! ! What about his childhood? Money mad motion picture studios or success hungry relatives don't care about that all important human period of life, or don't appreciate it. God, forgive them . . .

'Sugar Chile' Named Child Of The Year

The Chronicle Detroit, Michigan Sat. 7-27-46

A capacity audience overflowing into West Warren, witnessed the awarding to Sugar Chile Robinson of the "Distinguished Child of the Year" award, presented by Youth Councils of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People at Carter Metropolitan church, Thursday, July 18 The presentation was made by Miss Katherine Hurley of the North End Youth Council.

Greatest Single Achievement

In awarding Sugar Chile the "Distinguished Child of the Year" scroll on behalf of Detroit NAACP Youth councils, Miss Hurley said, "This certificate of honor is being awarded you because as a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People you have made the greatest single achievement of any youth in the city."

Presenting an interracial program, the master of ceremonies, Jackie Vaughn, devoted the remainder of the evening to a protest meeting for the retention of OPA. The body went on record unanimously adopting a resolution declaring:

"The scuttling of OPA by veto necessitated by Congress failure to pass an effective price control law, has caused rents, food and other items to sky rocket. We note that prices are daily mounting, that many families are being mercilessly evicted from their dwellings causing great suffering to young people and children as well as entire families. We further note that our State Legislature has passed an ineffective "temporary" rent control measure which takes advantage of the present confusing of price control and allows an unwarranted rent increase of 15 per cent."

Two-Day Picket

The Youth decided to call on Senator Ferguson and Senator Vandenberg as well as our representative to vote for a measure which includes controls on rents, meats and other items, included in the original control law: a meat buyer's holiday for one week beginning July 19th and continuing until July 26th, picket lines on Friday and Saturday; support of the UAW-CIO and other organizations which are fighting to maintain effective price controls and rent control; census of neighborhoods to determine how many citizens are registered; call for the immediate passage of the Wagner Ellender Taft Housing bill.

A panel discussion presenting the findings of the recent NAACP national convention was chaired by Daniel Neusom, central council president of the NAACP Youth councils. Members of the panel included Miss Edith Peters, president of the West Side Council, Mr. Herbert Stanford and Miss Josephine Edwards, all youth delegates to the Cincinnati conference. Others appearing on program were Mr. Erwin Phillips of Oklahoma, Miss Joann Ellis, Council of Churches, Betty McCullough, Mr. Robert Johnson, Hoziah Williams, Donald Behanna, president of the West-Side Youth Council is Rosie Freeman. The advisor is Mrs. Hanola Johnson.

'Sugar Chile' In New Triumph

The Defender Chicago, Ill.

Piano Wizard Does His Stuff On Skates

Sat. 8-24-46

LOS ANGELES — Sugarchile Robinson, 8 year old wonder boy of the piano keys and Mabel Fairbanks, 20 year old wonder girl of the ice, got together this week backstage at the Lincoln Theatre where Sugarchile is currently putting on a show.

It was Sunday afternoon when the two met and began some "sharp" talk. They threw words at each other like they had been buddies since Rap Van Winkle fell asleep in Sleepy Hollow. At first friends and relatives of the little genius didn't think he knew what he was talking about in praising Mabel's art. But Sugarchile stumped them all in saying, "You know, Mabel, I think Time Magazine wrote the best story about you." They wouldn't imagine an 8 year old reading Time Magazine.

Hollywooders all love Sugarchile. In four days at the Lincoln he grossed as much as the previous show did in one week. Playing with his fists, thumbs, elbows and last of all—fingers, Sugarchile has wowed them with "Sugarchile Boogie," "The Honeydripper" and "A Bob Ba Ba Le Ba." But he brings down the house on "Caldonia." Instead of kicking up one foot a la Jordan, Sugarchile kicks up both. Mabel, sitting in the audience, almost went into hysterics to see it.

After the first show, Mabel and Sugarchile had dinner where the master of the piano decided he had to see Mabel skate. They made a date to ride out to Pasadena's Winter Garden. Sugarchile even suggested he try a little skill on the ice—with Mabel's supervision, of course—and surprised everyone.

Jim Crowed Audience Cheers While 'Sugar Chile' Performs

The Defender Chicago, Ill. Sat. 6-15-46

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Held powerless by an injunction restraining picketing, the local NAACP branch last week stood by helplessly while Sugar Chile Robinson rocked a segregated audience in the Jim Crow Armory here.

The picketing, which the NAACP began Thursday upon learning that the audience would be segregated during the child pianist's performance, was restrained in an order granted by Circuit Judge Lawrence Speckman on petition of Armory Manager Irving Wayne. Wayne represented Leo A. Seltzer, Chicago promoter, who has a 15 year lease on the Armory auditorium.

Judge Speckman asserted picketing would be an incentive for "trouble between the races," and persons staging entertainments may sell tickets to "anyone they please." Custom here recognizes segregation, he added.

"If Sugar Chile had known the races would be segregated for his performance, his parents would not have approved his contract to appear here," said Alfred A. Carroll, NAACP president and attorney.

What with "Hey Babba Ree-bah," "Cal-doan-yah," and his piano playing with fingers, balled up fists and elbows, the boogie kid stood his divided audience on its ear.

Seated Negro on one side and white on the other, the crowd roared "More Sugar Chile," whistling and clapping wildly.

Carroll said the management indicated the setup might be changed in the future.

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers (Frankie "Sugar Chile" Robinson)

CHICAGO HONORS 'SUGAR CHILE' ROBINSON

A highlight of Frankie "Sugar Chile" Robinson's recent appearance at the Regal Theater in Chicago was his visit as special guest to the municipal court of Judge Gibson Gorman.

Photo shows the child piano prodigy, who is only seven years old, wielding the gavel as he announces: "Order in the courtroom, please." — Chicago Defender photo by Scott Tyler.

Capt. Thomas Alcock (right) pins "special police badge" on Frankie (Sugar Chile) Robinson, child prodigy, who recently demonstrated his piano technique at Chicago's Regal Theatre. Sugar Chile's badge authorizes him to influence other Billikens of his age in the duties of real American citizenship. Sgt. Glenn Crockett (rear), director of the Fifth District Juvenile Police Club, smiles his approval at "Sugar Chile's" appointment.

I use them fists and elbows because when I was little I couldn't reach them notes and now I can't get that volume so I still use them fists and elbows.—*Sugar Chile Robinson, seven-year-old Negro boogie-woogie pianist.*

"Sugar Chile" Likes Dogs and Boogie; Nothing Else Matters

By GRACE MATTHEWS

RICHMOND—Frankie "Sugar Chile" Robinson, the seven year old 49-pound, whiz at boogie-woogie, wasn't worried a bit over his performance before several thousand fans at the Mosque Theatre last Tuesday night.

He wasn't noticeably worried over the fact that several hundred disappointed people were turned away after every seat in the house was sold out. "Sugar Chile" was worried about a dog.

The little seven-year old, who's small for his age but who talks in a baritone voice with all the ease and confidence of a college student, was really worried about a dog—or maybe a couple of dogs, which he'd seen during the day.

TALKS ABOUT DOG

While the rest of the variety show went on, much to the obvious displeasure of the audience who came only to hear the tiny boogie-woogie expert "Sugar Chile" kept a running conversation with two little visitors, or his aunt, or his sister, or the policeman, or anyone who happened to be backstage about this dog.

Just before time for his entrance, his aunt called him aside, and the two discussed what he was going to play. They then practiced a few steps of the boogie, and then "Sugar Chile" waited patiently for his cue to go on the stage.

With both arms outstretched, "Sugar Chile" cannot reach the ends of the piano keyboard. This might be a disadvantage to some musicians, but not to "Sugar Chile" Robinson. For his 12 solid minutes, he made the piano rock with perfectly played boogie-woogie. He brought the house down with his singing.

WINS AUDIENCE

He has a remarkably well-developed sense of rhythm which, combined with his unusual flair for showmanship, made him one of the most enjoyable entertainers the audience had seen for a long time. The audience was his with his first bow—a tiny, little boy in a short blue serge suit, his face all lit up in smiles.

He gave a short talk to the audience and was "interviewed" by another member of the show. The conversation went like this, with "Sugar Chile" of course stealing the scene:

"How longh ave you been playing the piano, Sugar Chile?"

Since I was a kid." The audience howled.

"Well, how old are you."

Seven."

"What do you want to be most?"

"Eight." The audience is now in hysterics.

"Sugar Chile, how did you enjoy playing for President Truman?"

Soberly, "It was a great honor." The audience applauded.

NEVER EXCITED

At no time did he appear excited or upset by all the applause and cheers from the audience. In fact, throughout it all, he displayed poise and presence of mind becoming an old trouper. For instance, he had a short speech to make at the end of his appearance. The stage mike was too high for him, so when he rushed backstage after a bow, he whispered hurriedly to his aunt, "Must I use my piano mike?" and rushed out again to make his final talk and bow.

He might have been any star of stage or screen when the show was over.

UNSPOILED BOY

Despite his grown-up speech and his overwhelming success as one of the year's outstanding entertainers, "Sugar Chile" is still a lovable, unspoiled little boy whom you'd love to hug. He loves dogs and ponies, and loves to draw pictures of dogs.

"Aunt Gladys," this to his aunt, mopping of the brow.

"But why," asked his aunt.

Mrs. Gladys Robinson Bracey who takes beautiful care of him, "this is the first time I ever sweated." All of this has been said in animated but precise tones, with much

"I worked! I played." This with arms outstretched and hands waving emphatically. "Don't you know I worked?"

a high I. Q. He has never had music lessons, and his family has been advised not to give him any. His aunt and sister are his constant travelling companions, while his father stays home in Detroit with the rest of his sisters and brothers.

RODE PONY IN RICHMOND

He is the star of a show of good performers, all others white, which includes ballet dancers, a good marimba player, and other specialty numbers.

He has a full-time tutor. Eugene Richmond and took the town. One of Detroit, who travels of the other members of the show all the time. He is a enjoyed a sightseeing tour of the city with the Hagans, Allen Knight, local emcee, and others.

"Sugar Chile" Robinson came to

everybody's boy."

"You're not kidding," the genius at boogie answered, shaking his head.

"Isn't He Cute?"

Richmonders Go In Big Way for Frank "Sugar Chile" Robinson, Pint-Sized Boogie Expert

By CURTIS A. CROCKER

RICHMOND, Va. — "Isn't he cute?" Wasn't he wonderful?" "I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen him myself."

These were typical after-the-show comments last Tuesday night after Frank Isaac "Sugar Chile" Robinson had thrilled a capacity audience at Richmond's spacious Mosque Theater.

When the M. C. had finished introducing him, the little 7-year-old, 40-inch, 49-pound master of boogie ran half the distance of the stage to the piano and proceeded immediately to the task before him. All this was accompanied by a tremendous burst of applause which began the moment the 20th Century music marvel came in sight, and lasted a full minute after he had begun to take full control of the 88 keys before him.

PLAYS FOUR SELECTIONS

Among the four selections, "Sugar Chile" played were "Caldonia," his own arrangement of "Sugar Chile' Boogie," and "Hey-Bop-Re-Bop." This pint-sized musical genius plays with his fingers, fists, elbows and his heart. His feet and head work in perfect harmony with his fingers. His little legs necessitates a special platform in order for his tiny feet to beat out their rhythmic harmony and keep up with every other part of his small body which is also moving.

Before the show I had an opportunity to talk with him at his hotel room and found him to be an average American boy except for his music. He likes everything little boys his age like: candy, ice cream, funnies, picture books, movies etc. He had just returned from horseback riding when I interviewed him. He was very friendly and talkative as he sat on my knee and told me about himself.

BORN IN DETROIT

"Sugar Chile" was born and still lives in Detroit. He attends school and likes it too, he says. This pint-sized exponent of boogie has a tutor who travels with him. His aunt and sister, who are also accompanying him on his tour, corrected him when he said he had been playing the piano since he was a year and a half old. They say "Sugar Chile" was 3 1/2 when his musical genius was first exhibited. No one knew he was interested in music until one day, out of the clear blue, he went to the piano and played "Tuxedo Junction." From that time on he has been playing like a house afire. According to his aunt, this Lilliputian musical genius plays classics and boogie. When asked if he would favor his audience with some classical selections, he said, "I doubt it; If my audience likes boogie then they get boogie." He knew them better than I did because if turned out just as he said.

FRANK "SUGAR CHILE" ROBINSON

HIS BIG MOMENTS

I asked "Sugar Chile" to tell me of some of his big moments. First, he mentioned the night of March 2 when he played for President Truman at the White House correspondents' dinner. Next he told of the night he appeared on the program of the Hall of Fame with Paul Whiteman over a national network. A third great thrill he said, was in making MGM's forthcoming picture **No Leave, No Love,** with Van Johnson.

This atom-sized wonder has never had a music lesson in his life.

He was just born playing. He has four brothers and two sisters none of whom knows music. "Mr." Isaac's parents were originally from Alabama but moved to the Motor City immediately folowing World War I. "Sugar Chile" says his immediate goal is to become eight (years old) and his ultimate ambition is to be an orchestra leader.

I left him preparing to take a nap before the big show. Our interview had been interesting, pleasant and informative.

From Richmond Frank Isaac "Sugar Chile" Robinson's engagements will take him to Winston-Salem, N. C., Harrisburg, Pa., and Baltimore, Md. where his current tour ends. Then it will home for a while. Meanwhile other tours are being planned for him.

'Don't Quote Me', Says Sugar Chile

By Dolores Calvin

New York City—(Calvin's News Service)—Agile Sugar Chile Robinson, turning eight on December 28th and small for his age, actually likes carrots, spinach, chicken and milk—and "add a bowl of corn flakes and wheaties to begin with," he chuckled. We met him at the Hotel Theresa last week while he was on a short vacation between his latest MGM film, "No Leave, No Love" and a tour of one nighters.

Sugar Chile was in good spirits as we found him sitting on his bed in the hotel room and peering around at us. "Why so many repotrers?" he asked in a clear, un-child-like voice. "There are only two of us," we blushed. "But why two?" he asked. "Because you're important enough for two of us to -come," we smoothed it over. Sugar Chile didn't have an answer for that so he turned and looked out of the window to think up one.

"Did you like Hollywood?" was our first question. This started the little genius off. "Not particularly," he shrugged his shoulders. "It was nice. We had lunch with movie stars every date on the set and I saw plenty of Van Johnson. But Hollywood didn't make me go crazy," he smiled.

"Do you think Van Johnson is handsome?", we put in. "He looks like he does on the screen—just like himself," he told us.

"But is he handsome?", we pressed. "I don't know," replied Sugar Chile. I don't notice other men's looks. I notice girl's looks," he beamed.

"What do you do all day long?" we wanted to know.

"I sit here in the window and look out at the people and rest a great deal. Since I'm on vacation I must get plenty of rest. This is my first vacation in a long time and I won't get another soon," he answered.

"What do you like to do?" was next.

"I like mystery movies." he

"Do you ever get scared?", we asked.

"No", was the flat answer.

"Don't you think mysteries are sometimes silly?"

"You mean where the girl is supposed to run because some bad man is after her and she just stands up and waits to be rescued?" Sugarchile was in Earnest.

"What else do you like?"

"I like Donald Duck—I read him all the time. I remember he went to the restaurant and there was a sign to watch your hat. Donald got tired of watching his hat so he hung himself up on the hat rack and ate up there and put his hat on the table to watch it." Then Sugar Chile roared in laughter.

He stretched out on the bed in his long pants with the little suspenders and sighed. We remarked on his stretching and beban scribbling notes. He yelled "Don't quote me."

"But you didn't say anything" we assured him.

"SUGAR CHILE" WONDER HERE NEXT WEEK; DISCOVERED IN AMATEUR SHOW

"...and a little child shall lead them". It's a far cry from what the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 11, Verse 6, was talking about to the skyrocketing career of Frankie "Sugar Chile" Robinson, who will appear in concert at the Opera House of Kiel Auditorium on Thursday evening, June 6, at the head of a bill of outstanging artists—but it won't be the first time a Biblical quotation has been hauled out of context to characterize a temporal event.

Nor is it far-fetched, for the 7-year-old "Sugar Chile", whose present nation-wide concert tour is a tour-de-force unique in musical history, has been "leading them" ever since he first came out of obscurity to flabbergast a bored master of ceremonies with his slam bang boogie-woogie technique at an amateur contest audition for grown-ups in the dingy rehearsal room of a Detroit theater last October. He's "led them" to the tune of $44,000 his first week at the Downtown Theatre (that theatre's average $23,000) in Detroit, and $36,000 in a week at the Regal Theatre (that theatre's average $17,000) in Chicago plus setting a record at Chicago's loop house the Chicago Theatre. He's appeared on "We, the People", the Jack Smith Oxydol Show, and Paul Whiteman's Hall of Fame and other national radio appearances are in the offering. Millions have seen him in Fox Movietone News and Paramount News, and have read about him in Life, Newsweek, PM and dozens of other publications.

And his appearance with Jane Froman, Bert Wheeler, Paul Draper, Larry Adler, and other stars before President Truman at the White House Correspondent's dinner in Washington will long be remembered not only for his poise, ef-

fervescent personality and dynamic musicianship, but also for his unexpected one-pianist to-another a-side to the President during a rhythm break in his raucous rendition of Caldonia. "How'm I doin', Mr. President?"

"Sugar Chile" will appear with his company of entertainers next Thursday and a complete sell-out of seats is anticipated by the promoters.

The Powells Purchase Fine Apt. Building

Savannah, Ga.

New York (ANP)—Adam C. Powell and his pianist wife, Hazel Scott, are joint purchasers of a 10-story apartment house on swank Riverside drive. The property, measuring 99.11 by 105 feet, contains 9 apartments. Its assessed value is $345,000 and the sale was made for cash above a first mortgage of $228,000 held by the Metropolitan Life Insurance company. Mon. 4-8-46

The building was purchased from owner Albert H. Graham through the brokerage firm of D. H. Smith, who handled the transaction.

Thus the congressman becomes one of the first Negro holders on Riverside drive and it is possible that his house will contain mixed tenants. No announcement has been made concerning the house, which is fully occupied at present, although it may be expected that the congressman will have as his tenants New York's upper crust who will be able to carry the freight in rentals. No mention is made of the size of the apartments in the building. Further, no information as to the disposition of the present tenants has been made public. The sale was consummated on Tuesday, March 26.

Hazel Scott Named In $25,000 Suit

Chicago Defender

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Hazel Scott, popular boogie-woogie pianist, was named last week as defendant in a $25,000 suit filed by Benjamin F. Kutcher, concert promoter, in federal court here.

Kutcher's suit charges Miss Scott with breaking a playing date at the Memorial Auditorium at Trenton, N. J., on Dec. 3, which he claims cost him $1,736 for advertisement and publicity plus selling thousands of tickets. Sat 3-2-46

Miss Scott is supposed to have received an advance sum of $625. Under the contract, she was to have received $1,250 plus 50 per cent, Kutcher contends.

Vignettes...

Tribune

By acquaintanceship with one's own greats, the racial pride swells to a high tide.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Hazel Scott, pianist and singer, was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, on June 11, 1920. Both of her parents were creative workers. Her father who had been a well-known Negro scholar in Liverpool, England, had gone to Trinidad to teach English at St. Mary's College. Her mother was not only the daughter of the King's architect and a ranking debutante but a talented music student. In 1924, the family moved to the United States, where Mr. Scott taught at a Negro university. The family finally settled in New York City.

Miss Scott, apparently, was a prodigy in more ways than one. At the age of three she had learned to read; at three and a half, she had been found to have perfect pitch. Sat. 10-26-46

She attended the public schools of New York. Her. first important music teacher was Professor Paul Wagner of the Julliard School of Music, although at the time she was too young to enter the music college. At a recital and dance in Harlem when she was 13, she was presented as a child wonder. On the death of her father, her mother organized a women's orchestra in which Hazel played the piano and doubled in brass, since played the trumpet too.

When the band broke up, she got a chance in the 1938 Broadway show, "Sing out the News". She stopped the show with the hit tune, "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones". In 1940, she was hired at a new Greenwich Village night club, Cafe Society Downtown. When the Uptown cafe on 58th st. opened, she continued as a star, with occasional side trips to hotel and theaters.

In 1942, she played in the film, "Something to Shout About", and since then in "Broadway Rythem" "I Dood It", "The Heat's On", and "Rapsody in Blue". Her swing-style piano solos have been recorded in several phonographs albums. The salary she started on, $65, has risen to something like $1,500 a week, exclusive of movies. For her pictures in 1943 she was upped to a weekly $4,000 apiece.

Miss Scott is married to Adam Clayton Powell Jr., congressman from New York. They have one son. Her hobbies are collecting miniature band instruments, miniature pianos, and very old native Calypso songs which have not been heard in the United States.

She looks forward to concert work and a "legitimate" career, she says.

Adam Clayton Powells Have Son, Adam III

The Defender Chicago, Ill.

Sat 7-27-46

NEW YORK — A son was born to Hazel Scott Powell, famous boogie-woogie pianist, and her husband, Adam Clayton Powell, congressman, preacher and editor, last Wednesday at Sydenham hospital here. 7-27-46

The child, Adam Powell III, is the grandson of the preacher who brought fame to Abyssinian Baptist church, one of America's largest Negro congregations.

Noble Sissle Dedicates Song To Gen. Patton

Praises General For Unbiased Army Practices

PARIS—(ANP)—Thousands of GIs are now familiar with the "Red Ball Line," a new war song dedicated to Gen. George W. Patten Jr., and his dashing third army by Noble Sissle, famous bandleader and showman. Sissle's USO show has featured the song during tours of army camps in Europe.

A hard fighting man, Gen. Patton was familiarly known as "blood and guts" by his command and gained the reputation of being just as fair as he was rough. He rewarded his soldiers on the basis of performance rather than on the basis of color, members of his army have declared.

The story of Sgt. Frances Roberts' promotion to first lieutenant on the field of battle is a typical example of Patton's battle reaction. Roberts, a member of a quartermaster outfit attached to the general's army, and his men were assigned the task of keeping the third army tanks supplied with gasoline. They traveled far ahead of the smashing tanks only to find themselves deep into Germany.

Promoted On Spot

Afraid of being captured with the valuable oil, they decided to puncture the oil tanks and hide when they saw the general leading the advance forces of the army up the road, with his silver guns swinging at his side. Gen. Patton leaped from his tank, expressed gratitude for having the fuel on the spot, and immediately promoted Roberts from a sergeant to a first lieutenant. Sgt. Roberts is the son of Maj. Homer Roberts, formerly attached to the bureau of public relations of the war department.

The sergeant, who had carried silver bars in his pocket in anticipation of someday becoming a commissioned officer, pulled out the bars and gave them to Gen. Patton to pin on his shoulders. Roberts' bars were a present from Mrs. Jeanette Mahoney of Hollywood, who also believed that he would someday become an officer, and were given to him before he went into action.

Sissle is exected to feature the song, "Red Ball Line," in his show when it returns to the states.

"Red Ball Line"

PARIS—The "Red Ball Line," a new war song, recently dedicated to the late Gen. George S. Patton, was composed by Noble Sissle and set to music by Edgar Battle, ex-arranger for Benny Goodman, the the late Glenn Miller and Woody Herman.

THE "RED BALL LINE"
(chorus)

Down the Red Ball Line
That started at the sea
On the Red Ball Line
At the beach of Normandy
Twas a blazing hell
Of shot and shell
Of trucks and tanks
And fighting Yanks.
Both white and blacks
Without Railroad tracks
Through mud and ruts
With "blood and guts."
From the sea to the Rhine
Down the "Red Ball Line."

Noble Sissle Talks Of 'Shuffle' Past, Present

NEW YORK — Says Sissle: "Hitch your wagon to a star!"

Flournoy Miller, Eubie Blake and I "hitched our wagon" to one back in 1921. We were making out fairly well in vaudeville. While we weren't talking any steps back, we weren't going forward. Just marking time.

The reason was not lack of ambition of "know-how" on our part. Vaudeville booking agents and theater managers just arbitrarily denied us top-billing. So we were out both money and prestige. They said we weren't headliners. We didn't draw the money in the box office.

What to do about it?

We got together and decided to break into "the legitimate." To prove that we alone could draw audiences, we'd present the first all-colored show on Broadway. It turned out to be "Shuffle along" and more than proved our point. Plenty of times before the opening night, however, that star we'd hitched to seemed more like a whizzing comet and we whistled in the dark while we wondered where it would land us.

For years I've heard complaints about the scarcity of jobs available in the theater to Negro talent. It is not entirely the fault of the producers down-town. We, ourselves, should produce and finance our own shows.

Maybe this "New 1946 Shuffle Along" will start things off as did the original "Shuffle Along" which opened the down-town theatres to such all-Negro shows as Irving Miller and Macio Pinard's "Liza," Connie Immerman's "Hot Chocolate," and Eddie Hunter's "How Come," to mention just a few.

Anyway, "The New 1946 Shuffle Along" has hitched its wagon to a star. With some luck we'll be "ridin' high." In any case, we're "movin' along."

Noble Sissle Commended

NEW YORK CITY—An Army Special Service "commendation" to Noble Sissle who, with Edgar Battles, composed "The Red Ball Line," the great war song honoring the late General Patton and the soldiers comprising the Third Army was revealed recently in a letter written to Noble Sissle by Maj. Gen. A. R. Bolling, European Theatre Chief of Special Service.

Noble Sissle Home After One Year in ETO

NEW YORK—Noble Sissle, internationally famous bandsman, and the company of the USO-Camp Shows production of the Miller and Blake musical, "Shuffle Along," returned to New York, Friday after an extended and successful tour of Italy, France, Germany and Austria. Sissle arrived in New York on the transport Zanesville Victory and reported that the tour had been on of the most satisfying experiences of his life.

Noble Sissle

"Shuffle Along" went to Italy in early 1945, and from the onset became one of the most popular units in MTO. The unit played dozens of unscheduled hospital and recreation center shows in addition to their regular Camp Show performances, and Sissle devoted a large percentage of his free time to working with and conducting Army bands.

The show was thoroughly streamlined before embarking by authors Miller and Eubie Blake, with several new songs being added. Many of the cast of the original Broadway company went overseas with the show in addition to Noble Sissle's band.

Gladys Cooper was featured pianist, with Johnny Lee, The Miller Brothers and Lois, Olivette Miller, Freddy Gordon and the Four Harmonettes in key spots. The show gave more than 150 scheduled performances to a total audience of more than a million and a quarter service men.

Theatre Notes

Noble Sissle is holding up production on his Broadway revival of "Shuffle Along."

A hit overseas where it was presented to GI's by USO, the oldie, one of the biggest stage hits, was scheduled for the main stem early in September.

Sissle, a smart showman, knows that to be successful the revival production must have all the original had and more. "That means plenty of dough for costumes and settings to make up for the dearth of talent.

After the last war, Sissle, along with Miller and Lyles and Eubie Blake, was able to round up a million dollars worth of entertainers whom Broadway had never seen before because they had been playing in segregated Dixie houses.

There were also scores of beautiful girls anxious to make theatrical careers. There were also no unions to make productions prohibitive. As a result, "Shuffle Along" was a great musical.

All that is changed today. All of the topnotch acts (and they are few) are well-known in Broadway theatres and Hollywood and night clubs.

The black-face comedian, a sensation 20 years ago, is now passe.

The radio has taken the novelty off the great choirs which were the backbone of colored shows of the period and any jitterbug on the corner can out-dance the speediest chorines who also revolutionized Broadway back in the twenties.

Sissle and his gang have one ace in the hole, however. The book of "Shuffle Along" is ageless and one of the funniest ever written.

They have a precedent in the fact that "Show Boat," one of the greatest hits of the Ziegfeld period, was recently revived, and today makes many modern Broadway musicals look like two bits.

SELF-MADE STAGE PERSONALITY ACCLAIMED "MOST VERSATILE"

Baltimore City Black Dispatch

Valaida Snow "A Sensation"

1-2-46

LOS ANGELES.—Valaida Snow, billed as the nation's newest singing sensation began a week's engagement at the Orpheum theatre. Patrons accepted her as a unique entertainer—for that has been her reception wherever she has appeared. Bringing song delineations keyed by her remarkable personality, she also soloed upon the trumpet, which has made her famous. These are noteworthy facts about the girl who has leaped to stardom in so short a time. It is the Valaida Snow of extreme versatility, which the public never knows. Few persons upon the American scene today posses her extraordinary talents and background. She is a fine painter, in fact, many of her pictures have been exhibited. One of them is in the Metropolitan museum in New York. She speaks five languages and plays 14 musical instruments.

2-2-46

Her reputation as a producer enabled her to stage, costume and routine production of some of the country's leading night spots. Her genius designing costumes was noted by both Paris and New York, and, as a result she has been called in by leading modistes to create fashions.

In France an entire culture group with a great many of the country's leading authors and painters revolved around her salon. When all of these attainments are enumerated, the most remarkable fact of all is that Valaida did not receive a college education.

Miss Snow is also being considered by several major studios for an important role in the near future.

IN SENSATIONAL COMEBACK ROLES

Defender

66c

Chicago, Ill.

VALAIDA SNOW

Whose career was almost ended with her stay of several months in a German concentration camp during the war is back on top again. She is currently co-featured with Billy Daniels at New York's famed Club Barom. Sat. 10-5-46

Valaida Snow Regaining Fame As America's Singing Star

By H. HARRY RILEY, JR.

The Tribune, Washington, D.C.

Sat. 8-10-46

It is truly a superb treat to witness a performance by a true artist of unmeasurable will power, determination and real Americanism we all talk about. For a woman, her spirit never fails because God never fails. She gave reverence to the Almighty upon arrival on good American soil, by kneeling and kissing, American good earth, praising the Master's handy work. Yes, after leaving the Nazi concentration camp still alive, she knew only God saved her. For this, Valaida Snow gave many thanks.

Baptured by Nazi

Miss Snow was touring Copenhagen in 1942 when the Nazis over-ran Denmark and captured her. Her patriotic spirit being stout, she refused to give the Nazis' salute and was lashed. She misses her golden trumpet, gift from Queen Wilhelmena of the Netherlands the Nazis stole. She was a top entertainer when all this happened and stopped a great star destined to conquer all European hearts.

Miss Snow's mother, Mrs. Ella Washington, is a graduate of Howard University and taught school in D.C. for years. The mother and the grand mother, Mrs. Mary Washington, are musical. A local teacher, Thomas Heathman, informed me that he gave Mrs. Ella Washington her first piano lesson when the family lived on Benning Road.

Valaida at Club Bali

When Valaida moved into Benny Caldwell's newly decorated Club Bali, the D.C. home of stars, for two weeks, the town raved over her swell performances and superb artistry. Her manager husband, Earle Edwards, nursed and cuttled this Nazis' blemished star back to glitter. She now has a deeper interest in her public and what they like. Her willingness to please all is unlimited.

Vocal-Dramatics

That one-time popular son, "Chloe," has been worked by many vocal artists yes, dramatized too; but please see the one and only Valaida Snow give you her version. She is a pschologist who analyses herself and produces actual tears by mentally living her dreadful experience over and over again while calling "Chloe," through dramatic song renditions.

In this number, Miss Snow is a show within a show, because her method of telling the lyric story gives one a swamp picture with everglades, the loved one lost therein and the other most franticly calling loudly for "Chloe."

Her voice is not stage worn. She has superb lung-pressure and volume. When any stage star turns a stage job as Valaida does with patrons thunderously applauding for more and more and preventing her exit, they'll surely regain their stage fame in any country. This she is doing. There is a big spot awaiting her in a new Broadway production, contracts are to be studied. Miss Snow sings the Jewish, hymn "Eli, Eli," "Ava Marie" and other lovable numbers with the same routine.

This lady has to rest on the stage a little after such heavy song versions, but she plays her trumpet and sings a popular song to drive away fatigue. Anyone hearing her play readily approves her ability that rates with the best. Trumpet high and low notes are no problem to her, because she is a trained musician playing 14 instruments.

Unusually Talented

Valaida, truly seems to be a superlady, because she has many talents. She is a housewife who loves cooking, modiste, all forms of sewing, an artist with paintings in Parisian and American galleries, hair-dresser, barber, music arranger, composer, show producer, speaks nine foreign languages and sings in five. She also is a collector of rare perfumes and loves to blend them.

Lover of Sports

This international singing star loves horse back riding, tennis, golf, ping pong, all popular dances, including jitterbugging and all the trimmings; plays softball, admires baseball, basketball, football, rugby, cricket, polo and others. Sat. 8-10-46

I had to laugh aloud because it's funny to me, Miss Snow has been around, the world mostly on water two times and crossed the Atlantic eight times filling triumphant engagements and it's funny to me, Miss Snow you have plenty of vim to really sing. Folks, you have no one to blame if you do not see and hear Miss Valaida Snow regain her fame at Caldwell's Club Bali.

66c 1946 Orchestras, Entertainers, (Josh White)

"A song is like a guitar string," says Josh. "It's got to ring true."

Look 8-20-46

Josh White

His "fighting blues" are a plea for tolerance

Des Moines, Iowa

LOOK LISTEN

Joshua Daniel White is a troubadour on a crusade. Guitar in hand he sings out against injustice and intolerance. Now in his fourth year of balladeering at New York's Cafe Society (Uptown and Down), he has introduced many topical favorites: *The House I Live In, Free and Equal Blues*—and in another vein—*One Meatball* and *The Outskirts of Town*. Look

Although Josh cannot read any music, his training goes back 23 years. He left home, Greenville, S. C., at the age of 7, leading a blind man. For four dollars a week he sang spirituals and played the tambourine. By 11, he had reached New York and was known as the "Singing Christian." While in New York he recorded several albums. 8-20-46

Married at 17, Josh was just beginning to do well when he cut his right hand, almost severing three fingers. Frantic at the thought of not being able to play his beloved guitar, Josh protested against amputation, begged for a chance to let the hand heal on its own. For three years he worked as an elevator operator, finally was able to use his hand again. Look

When casting started for *John Henry*, with Paul Robeson, a search was made for the "Singing Christian." Josh got the part, found himself on Broadway. But he won't sing in any play or movie if he feels it is detrimental to his race. "I like to sing," he says. "It's the best way to get a message across."

Troubadour Josh White Featured in 'Look' Mag

The Spokesman Minneapolis, Minnesota Fri. 8-9-46

NEW YORK (NNPA) — Josh White, described as a troubadour on a crusade, is featured in an article appearing in the issue of Look Magazine, released last Saturday.

A singer of ballads to his own accompaniment on the guitar, Josh is in his fourth year at Cafe Society (Uptown and Down), where he has introduced such favorites as "The House I Live In," "Free and Equal Blues," "One Meatball," and "The Outskirts of Town."

Of Josh the article states that he will not sing in any motion picture or play if he feels it is detrimental to his race. Fri. 8-9-46

Josh White Triumphs In Orchestra Hall

Defender Chicago, Ill. 66c

Sat. 11-23-46

Josh White, his unique voice and guitar invaded the usually symphonic walls of Orchestra Hall Monday night in a concert that gained more in appreciation than anything that has hit Chicago this season.

But even Josh White, great as he is, must share some of the evening's patron appeal with Josephine Premice, a West Indiana Calypso singer-dancer, without whom the fine performance by the levee, camp-meeting singer might have become a repetitious bore. Miss Premice was distinctly grand in pantomime choregraphy and later in her rendition of West Indian songs. She was accompanied by Indio Macurije, drummer who invaded Harlem from the Islands last season and became a sensation.

As to Josh White his songs were especially pleasing to the packed house. Lyrically the numbers were touching and soul stirring which, more than all else, accounts for his terrific audience appeal.

This was borne out in his attempt to sell "Miss Otis Regrets," a number that Ethel Waters featured in a Broadway show. Josh is not an Ethel Waters vocally and even the crowd recognized it in its over generous applause for everything the artists did.

Josh White has everything his billing promises, including a classical set of fingers for the guitar, that produce seldom-matched tones. But his ability to sell a well chosen program; his unique voice, and the fact that he gives the kind of program you won't see again until he returns makes him a natural for Chicago audiences.